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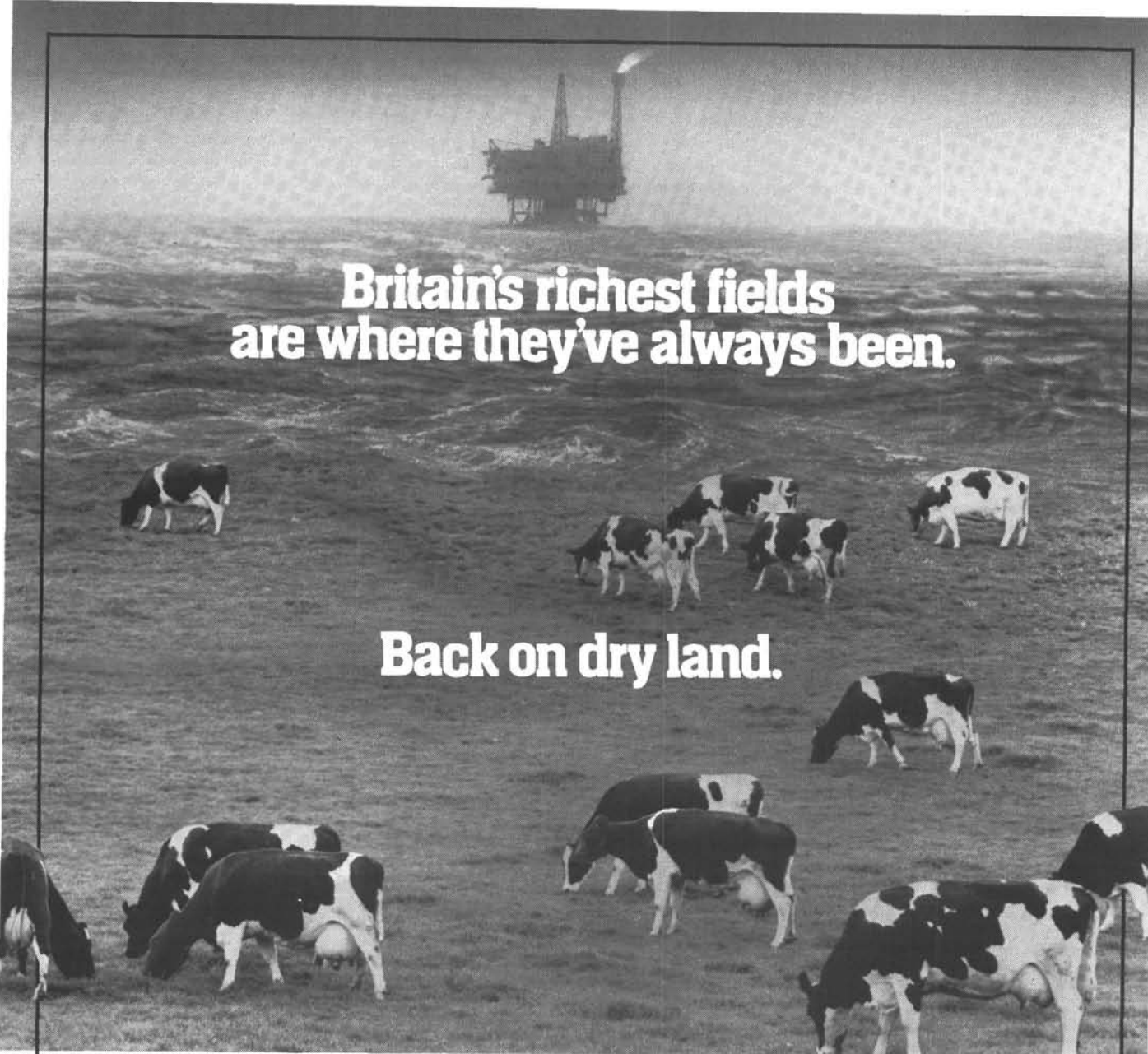
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Cover drawing: Colin Wheeler

Virtuous shopping

'Boycott this, don't buy that.' Is there anything left? Is there any point? JOHN RENTOUL's guide for the ethical consumer 10

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FROM NEXT WEEK:

The Statesman *will* be New: it will look, feel and read different; It will cover the central issues of politics, society and culture with a new care for truth and for style; It will set new agendas for non-Thatcherite politics, make new demands on a reviving Left, ask new questions of all shades of politics; It will give established writers new space, and new writers an early chance; It will bring you new insights into the arts and literature, and will be the first forum for new arts and writings.

NEXT WEEK

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WHATEVER HAPPENED TO LABOUR'S LEFT?

. . . or, the ambush being prepared for Neil Kinnock. JOHN LLOYD and SARAH BENTON report

VIRTUOUS USURY

Part 2 of JOHN RENTOUL's guide to (ideologically) sound money: who to bank with and ethical investment



AN EXAMPLE TO THE WORLD'S PRESS

America's I. F. Stone in profile

PHIL KNIGHTLY on the media

A semi un-housed polecat

NORMAN TEBBIT has been the most interesting Cabinet Minister in the Thatcher governments. A polecat turned statescat, he crafted (though did not bring into law) the 1984 Trade Union Act: it is a measure which is likely to survive, in essentials, a change of government, and which — as he predicted before its passing — may ultimately assist unions by rendering their structures more accessible and transparent.

He was, at the height of his powers, that rare figure in British politics — a right-wing populist, hostile to organised labour but also (more quietly, of party necessity) contemptuous of grandeeism, do-nothing management and wet conservatism. When a Tebbit succession to Thatcher was all the rage in the press, he was seen, rightly, as a figure who would attempt to shake at least some of the structures of civil society more vigorously than she had.

His abrasive rudeness was public: privately, he won golden opinions from civil servants and some trade union leaders for his industry and moderation. He had the self-made man's gut belief in the efficacy of self-help ('my father . . . got on his bike'): with it, all his distrust, even incomprehension, of collective provision.

His brief (15-month) period at the Department of Trade and Industry showed him a nationalist, persuadable to protect or boost British industry — while never showing any public sign of challenging the sacred tenet of his government that the market can and will make efficient and competitive an industry palpably being flattened by the state capitalisms of Japan, West Germany and France.

Why write of him in the past tense? Because he is now being talked of in it by those of his colleagues and their advisers who are thinking of how they are to win the next general election. Tebbit's life was nearly lost in the IRA's most audacious piece of terrorism, the Brighton bomb of October 1984: his wife will remain largely paralysed for the rest of her life. Great shame, it is now being said; but Norman not what he was: can't let sentiment pre-empt victory.

There is real substance to this, though Tebbit has dubbed it early silly-season stuff. The specific 'charges' against him are that, in his period as party Chairman, he has done little to revive party morale, little to fill Central Office coffers, keeps putting his foot in others' departmental briefs and — most heinous of all — has backed the wrong advertising agency.

Yes, that is the most heinous of all. Tebbit wants to stick with Saatchi and Saatchi, no doubt because they pander to his saturnine sense of humour (remember the hilarious 'Labour isn't working' posters in 1979?). His long time adviser, Michael Dobbs, is now a Saatchi deputy chairperson. But Young and Rubicam, a rival (US-owned) advertising giant, has produced a report for the Prime Minister which shows that voters' attitudes — irrespective of their socio-economic classification — are often hostile to present Tory policies or image, especially on such matters as the National Health Service and public spending. This 'Values and Lifestyles' research, as it is known, is said to weigh heavy with the Prime Minister, and more of it will wait her return from holiday.

The relatively bullish strategy being pushed by Saatchi and the more cautious Young and Rubicam material now has a high level ministerial committee deciding between them. At the top of the government, closest attention is being given to presentation, the

question of which mask to turn to the electorate come the day. Medium has become message: thoughts are being given to the handsome, jolly working-class-lad John Moore, recently elevated to Cabinet as Transport Minister, or to chubby, jolly Kenneth Clarke, the Paymaster General, as Tebbit's replacement — even by those who mark at least the latter down as not 'one of us'.

The casualty in all this is likely to be Norman Tebbit, who wants to remain true to radical Toryism and his gut instincts. It is good news for the Left that the radical star of Thatcherism is on the political decline: it is bad news for Labour, for political democracy and every citizen that the coming campaign will be slicker, better financed, better informed, better packaged, more insidious, more mendacious and less about the fundamental problems facing this country than ever before. □

She has made the struggle longer

THE PRIME MINISTER is now trapped in a mess of contradictions over sanctions. She has moved the teeny-weensiest bit along the sanctions road: at the same time she lets it be known everywhere that she is against them on principle and in practice. Yet even while saying they are useless, she offers President Botha alleviation from their uselessness if he mitigates apartheid. She is terribly concerned for the jobs and wellbeing of the Black citizens of South Africa — after seven years of indifference to the effect of her policies on the jobs and wellbeing of white and Black citizens here.

By imposing the bare minimum of sanctions with the greatest of reluctance, she has ensured that they will be pointless and may have ensured that they will be worse than that. South Africa's still-

resilient economy can adjust to small, incremental sanctions bit by bit: real pressure comes from a sharp shock. Sanctions of themselves will not be the agent of change, of course, but they are most likely to work (as in the case of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe) when they are linked to the reinforcement of anti-apartheid forces within the country, who will inevitably be the main agents for change because they have the most to gain from it.

In a perceptive recent report ('The Scope for Sanctions', Catholic Institute for International Relations), Richard Moorsom says: 'The objective [of sanctions] is to shorten the period of struggle and reduce the cost of human suffering.' Mrs Thatcher has made that period longer than it might have been.

Her posture is likely to become even more eccentric internationally than it presently is. The line from Washington earlier this week was that Capitol Hill will pay more attention to the 48 members of the Commonwealth which voted for a wide range of sanctions than the one which did not: this will ensure that the sanctions package to be voted on by the Senate later this year will be far stronger than the UK's. West Germany, hitherto Britain's ally in fudge and stalling, is now shifting the same way; the Japanese government, ever reluctant to take any particular international position, will probably follow suit. To be sure, they have less to lose than we do *in the short term*; to be sure, too, this is our chance to exercise moral leadership on the international stage, and we are shamed by our Prime Minister in being made to squirm out of taking it.

In the long term, even self-interest concurs with morality. South Africa will be Black-run some day, in the lifetimes of most of us. It will remain a developed, modern economy with a need for trade and a historic link to our economy. In this respect, at least, the Prime Minister is being consistent: she is running down our long-term prospects for immediate economic or political gain, fouling our future for the sake of expediency or prejudice. It has been a very, very bad week for Britain in the world. □

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WAPPING REPERCUSSIONS

SPARKS STILL FLYING OVER EETPU RECRUITMENT DRIVE

ELECTRICIANS employed by Rupert Murdoch's News International are demanding disciplinary action against the top officials of the Southampton EETPU Area for their role in the secret recruitment of workers to Wapping. The *New Statesman* can disclose that the EETPU London Press branch, representing 246 electricians at the Gray's Inn Road and Bouverie Street print works, has been trying for over four months to start disciplinary action against Mick Scanlon, secretary of the Southampton EETPU Area. **MARK HOLLINGSWORTH** reports

SEAN GERAGHTY, the London Press branch's secretary, wrote to Eric Hammond, the EETPU general secretary on 18 March 1986 calling for Scanlon to be disciplined under Rule 27 for 'bringing . . . discredit upon the union'. Geraghty has accused Scanlon of not only causing print workers to lose their jobs but also jeopardising the employment of his own members. Based on documents leaked from Wapping, Geraghty says Scanlon 'used his position to place in employment his three sons and daughter at Wapping.'

According to the staff lists, Neil, Paul and Bill Scanlon have been working as 'Press Room Operators' and Anne Scanlon, his daughter, has been in the 'Photocomposing/Platemaking' section. Geraghty also wants action taken against Mrs Vivian Seaman, Mick Scanlon's secretary. Her son Steven Seaman, a former managing director of a cleaning company, is now a 'Personnel Officer' at Wapping while her daughter, Tanya Seaman, a former hairdresser, works in the Photocomposing/Platemaking department.

The London Press branch have been considering what action to take against Scanlon since the beginning of the dispute. For most of last year Sean Geraghty was negotiating with Bill O'Neill, Murdoch's chief labour relations executive, for his members to go to Wapping.

But from July 1985, workers from Southampton were being secretly recruited via the EETPU Area office at Bedford Place, Southampton. They left by coach at 6.30 am every morning from the Old Ship Inn, Bursledon — just 40 yards from Mick Scanlon's house. Not once was Geraghty, a prominent left-winger in the union, approached by News International for any of his members to be interviewed for these jobs. Instead, a consultant called Charles Paterson was hired and the covert recruitment drive was under way without informing the Fleet Street

electricians.

Geraghty tells the *NS* that Scanlon 'has supplied people who are doing my members' jobs at Wapping. We hold the EETPU directly responsible for the loss of those members' jobs'. He also says that the workers recruited via Southampton were as 'printers' and not as 'contractors'.

'My members' jobs'

Mick Scanlon, who was nominated by Eric Hammond when appointed as Area Secretary in 1979, at first denied that any EETPU member was doing work that could be described as belonging to print workers. 'We are not in the business of putting print workers out of



Eric Hammond, boss of electricians' union EETPU, and (right) Sean Geraghty, a left-winger who says his branch was by-passed by Wapping recruitment

Both photos: Andrew Ward/Report

business', he told members of the EETPU Hythe branch in December 1985. But in a statement on 3 February 1986, he said: 'In the course of their work the members concerned showed they could not only commission but also operate much of the equipment at Wapping . . . We possess a membership with the qualifications and skills needed in the electronic printing era'.

The complaint against Scanlon was discussed at an EETPU Disciplinary Committee meeting on 7 July. But an EETPU spokesperson says: 'We can't discuss the matter of the Disciplinary Committee with the press'. Eric Hammond, general secretary, Tom Rice, the EETPU's

national officer for newspapers, and John Grant, director of communications, are all on holiday and unavailable for comment.

Meanwhile, the 246 electricians have continued to go into Gray's Inn Road and Bouverie Street. Most of them have had nothing to do and Murdoch has so far paid out about £1,800,000 in wages. The only work available is the printing of the *Guardian* at Gray's Inn Road and that contract runs out in November 1987.

But now the forgotten electricians of Fleet Street are being offered voluntary redundancy. There is virtually no chance of them going into Wapping. ●



Polls say Labour, hard cash says not

WHILE PETER KELLNER is out of the country, don't get too excited about Labour topping the magic 40 per cent barrier in the opinion polls. The Tories have resumed as favourites to win most seats, according to two of the three bookmakers who quote odds on the next election.

Ladbroke and Coral have relegated Labour to evens and 5-4 against, while William Hill keeps the faith with Labour odds-on favourite. Labour has fallen back in the *NS Tick Tack Index*, which averages the odds quoted by all three bookies.

Tories	48 (+5)
Labour	44 (-5)
Alliance	8 (0)

(Likelihood of each party winning the most seats, as a percentage; change since May in brackets.)

Ladbroke's Ron Pollard says he changed the odds on 2 July (when Labour and Tories were level-pegging), because there was 'a bit of money on the Tories'. He 'very, very rarely' takes any notice of opinion polls. Most dramatic perhaps was his marking the Liberal/SDP Alliance down as hopeless outsiders, down from 14-1 to 20-1 (that is, a £1 stake plus 10p tax wins you £20, plus your £1 back).

In the opinion polls, meanwhile, Labour scored 41 per cent (11½ point lead) in *Sunday Today's* Marplan poll and 41 per cent (9 point lead) in last Thursday's Channel 4 News MORI

poll, obliterating the nasty shock of last Tuesday's *Standard* MORI poll, which gave Labour a one-point lead on 37 per cent.

The City has become obsessed with opinion polls, with the foreign exchange markets — just like a bookmaker's shop only on a larger scale — hedging against a Tory defeat or hung parliament. Lloyds Merchant Bank, of all psephologists, has analysed Gallup poll figures for the government's popularity and concludes that the Tories' mid-term recovery is already six months late.

Lloyds' Beatrice Parrish has found that until February this year, the steady decline in the numbers of people 'approving of the government's record to date' (declining by about two-fifths), tracked almost exactly the average decline in the first 32 months after each of the last four elections.

The approval rating — if it had followed the average of the previous four electoral cycles — should have started to turn up in month 32. But it's now month 38 and we're still plumbing the depths of the Tories' so-called mid-term trough.

John Rentoul

TAKE A CORAL ISLAND AND CRYSTAL CLEAR WATER — THEN DUMP ON IT

FOR THE SAKE of miserly savings on grants to a Dependent Territory, Britain may be about to agree to a deal by which Philadelphia ships metals-contaminated sewage out to the Turks & Caicos islands. Even Haiti would have nothing to do with it. ROBERT GORDON sounds the warning on this latest — metaphorically extraordinarily apt — example of the First World seeking to tidy its own doorstep by heaping the rubbish on someone else's

APPLIED Recovery Technology Inc of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA, is proposing an \$18 million a year contract for British Government long-term permits to dispose of American sewage on the uninhabited Caribbean island of West Caicos, in the Turks & Caicos group (lately all over the British newspapers for other reasons).

Conservation experts are convinced that despite the apparent suitability of an uninhabited location the scheme would wreak havoc on the crystal clear waters of the region and jeopardise the fishing industry. The government of the Turks & Caicos is currently facing dismissal by Westminster following an enquiry into the islands' affairs and the jailing of two government ministers for drugs smuggling. Recent developments have heightened concern in the islands that a decision on the sewage plan could be taken over their heads by Whitehall, and in the face of almost universal local opposition.

First details of the Philadelphia scheme emerged in a report prepared by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) in April 1985*. Since May of this year a firm proposal has been sitting on the desks of officials at the ODA even though they have privately admitted that the environmental implications for the seas in the area are such that the scheme should never have received serious consideration.

The sludge, consisting of human waste, is contaminated with a range of heavy metals and inorganic compounds. It comes from a site in the Philadelphia area which is to be cleared for building development. With US authorities coming under increasing pressure from the environmental lobby to find an alternative to sea dumping the plan is to pump the sewage ashore to be treated and dried out.

Haiti has already rejected the contract which would have brought their island \$24 million a year. Applied Recovery Technology now hopes that for \$18 million a year Britain will agree to the use of West Caicos as a site for a treatment works and drying pans. The ODA's 1985 report talked of an area of 400 hectares (1,000 acres) being required

for the proposed dump and stated then that it 'could create serious degradation to the marine environment.'

Money for old . . .

The financial return for the Islands could provide relief for Britain from grants which are currently paid to support the Dependent Territory. During 1986 these will amount to £5 million of which £3.5 million is taken up by technical assistance and capital projects, with the remainder going towards balancing the islands' budget.

The plan has aroused controversy amongst both the islands' government and officials in London. The waters around the islands are some of the cleanest remaining in the whole of the Caribbean. The area supports a thriving fishing industry and West Caicos itself is home to a wide variety of wildlife including flamingos, herons and humming birds.

West Caicos has been recommended as a nature reserve by the IUCN (International Union for

the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources). The IUCN's *Coral Reef Directory*, to be published this month, lists spectacular submarine vertical cliffs and caves.

The coastal waters of the Caribbean Sea are its most productive, but, at the same time, most vulnerable zone. The balance of marine plants and animals, precisely adapted to their environment, is easily upset by pollution. With West Caicos consisting of highly porous oolitic limestone and solution holes, the ODA's report says 'there would be little to prevent any large quantity of sewage from penetrating the holes and reaching the sea'. Lake Catherine — a saline lake on the island — could quickly become polluted.

Cartagena delenda

In March 1983, 27 nations — including 12 Commonwealth countries — signed the Cartagena Convention. This should have given legal force to an action plan for protecting and developing the marine environment of the Caribbean. The Convention contains a commitment to establishing national parks and protecting threatened species. So far, in Turks & Caicos, there are no national parks, no planning controls and no mechanism for preventing environmental damage.

At the Overseas Development Administration, officials are currently pondering conflicting

technical reports from their own Fishery Advisers and from Thames Water Authority as to whether the plan can be allowed on environmental grounds. Thames Water, in a report commissioned by ART Inc, have given the plan their backing. The Authority may benefit from contract work on the island.

But one conservation expert who has seen a copy of the report has said its contents would 'make your hair stand on end'.

The ODA's Natural Resource and Environmental Department are also far from enthusiastic. They pride themselves on going to great lengths in ensuring that development projects are environmentally sound.

Local alarm

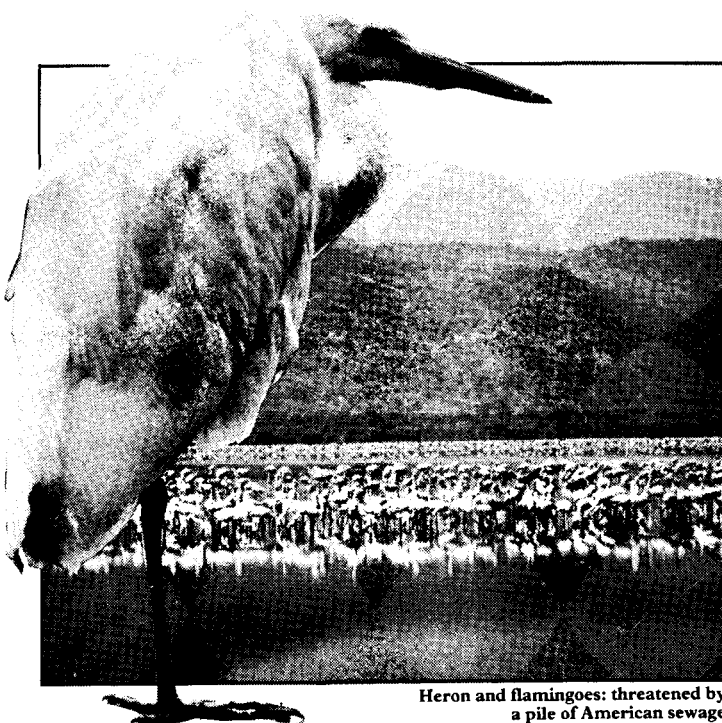
Details of the plan are widely known in the islands and have been reported in the *Turks & Caicos News*, an eight-page paper printed in Miami. Widespread opposition exists amongst the native inhabitants, expatriates, and the islands' government officials alike.

Situated about 200 miles north of Hispaniola and about one hour 20 minutes flight out of Miami, the islands, as a Dependent Territory of the UK Commonwealth, elect their own government but, in addition, Britain maintains a small permanent staff of government officials.

Whilst under normal circumstances Britain has no control over the islands' internal affairs, it can nonetheless exercise an influence through the Governor. The recent imprisonment of government ministers has sparked off reports that British troops have been placed on alert for the Governor to exert more direct control over the islands.

The waters around the Turks and Caicos group are some of the last places in the region where fish and coral have not been exploited. There has been no accurate survey conducted of either the fauna or the rich flora of the area. A checklist drawn up in 1982 showed that the islands were home to American flamingos, Brown Noddies and Sooty Terns, as well as the Snowy Egret, cormorant, heron, humming bird and osprey. It is thought that with the decline of the rock iguana on other islands in the group it may have found haven on West Caicos.

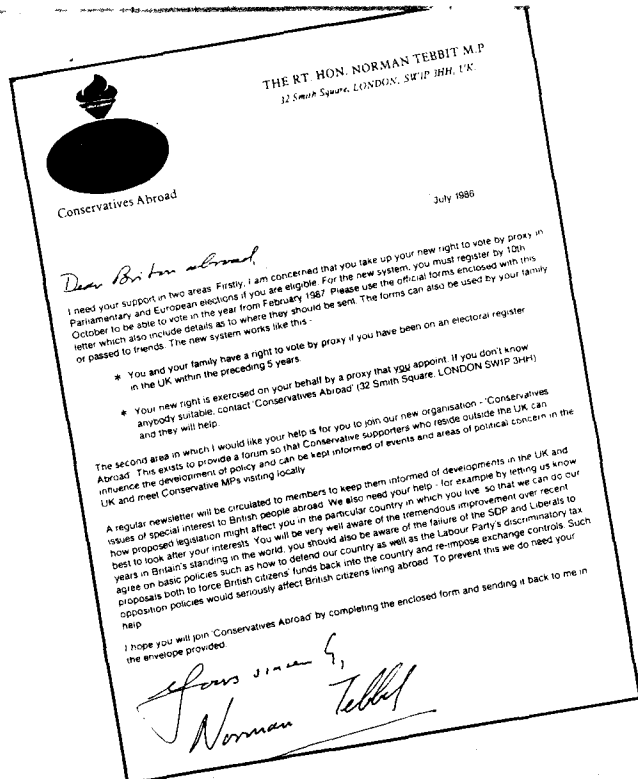
The Green Turtle is at risk from hunting by crews in power boats and though declining in number they haven't been afforded protection. With the sea grasses on which they feed highly susceptible to pollution it's likely that the Turtle will have considerably more to worry about if Whitehall officials allow the American application to go through.



Heron and flamingoes: threatened by a pile of American sewage

Both photos: Camera Press

*Environmental Appraisal of a Proposed Aragonite Mining Operation and other Proposed Activities at West Caicos Island, (1985) by A. J. D. Mitchell and Dr Dawson Shepherd, of the University of York's Tropical Marine Unit. Prepared by the Overseas Development Administration for the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands.



NICE TO SEE NORM DOING POORLY WITH THE EXPATS

AS TORY CHAIR Norman Tebbit drowns in the political disfavour of his colleagues it's pleasant to find that even his effort to whip up an expatriate Tory vote is getting nowhere in particular. **JOLYN JENKINS** on the affair of the useless mailshot

UNDER the 1985 Representation of the People Act which came into force this 11 July, British citizens living and working overseas who have been resident in the United Kingdom and registered as electors in the past five years became eligible to register as overseas electors.

The Labour party always appreciated that the new law was a ruse designed to increase the Tory vote, but appeared unable to think of a principled reason for opposing it.

Conservative Central Office was quick off the mark. Since March, three party workers in an office in Victoria have been compiling names and addresses of likely Tory supporters. Central Office bought access to two commercial mailing lists. It also sought the help of British embassies and consulates, which supplied addresses of expat social clubs whose members were likely to be rightward leaning.

As soon as the new law came into effect the team sent off 100,000 'letter from Norman Tebbit' mailshots. There have been odd results: Mr Chris Elston, a Labour-voting television technician living in Jersey, received a mailshot at an address he only ever used when applying for British Telecom shares.

A British woman who has lived in Kuwait for 20 years — and so has been away 15 years too long to be eligible — was also mystified to receive a letter from Norman. So far there have been 'a few hundred' responses.

A snip at £30

Tebbit's letter invited recipients to join a new organisation called 'Conservatives Abroad'. Annual membership costs £30, or £45 for family membership. This permits one to 'be kept informed of events and areas of political concern in the UK and meet Conservative MPs visiting locally.' One can also 'influence the development of policy'. This doesn't signify the introduction of democracy to the party — a spokesperson for Conservatives Abroad confirms it simply means that overseas branches will be set up.

'You will be well aware,' Tebbit adds optimistically, 'of the tremendous improvement in Britain's standing in the world... [and] the Labour Party's discriminatory tax proposals to force British citizens' funds back into the country and re-impose exchange controls.'

Should the recipient want to register to vote, the wherewithal is provided. With the Tebbit letter goes a registration form published by the Conservative Party, but looking extremely similar to the one printed by the Home Office and supplied to embassies. Central office admits that it's an exact duplicate, apart from lacking the Royal Crest, but points out that the Act allows one to register on a form 'to like effect'. A handy bit of drafting.

MISCELLANY in Amsterdam

In *Madame Arthur's* bar on the Warmoesstraat just off the crowded plaza of the Dam (where the Amstel river was first dammed in 1275, hence Amster-dam etc etc) and only a stoned tourist's throw from the Royal Palace, I trod heavily on the instep of a drag queen. Believe me, there are few more dangerous things in the world you can do. Other perhaps than go on to clutch at his bra-strap in a wild effort to regain balance. Which I did. The barman, lovely as Princess Di and dressed very similarly, sold me a gin, told me tonic was off, and was plainly within moments of telling me to be off. They're real men, queens, believe me.

We beat a hasty retreat three doors down to Jeaenne's Bar, where Belgian-born Jeaenne, built like the Refrigerator of the Chicago Bears, with vast bare forearms and studded belt, runs a heavy leather bar, all



inspired gloom, men scowling from beneath visors, and menace. Curious devices of metal and dead cow hang from the ceiling and a net contains a fine collection of boots. Jeaenne served beer in the bottle, macho-style, to my two companions, British political correspondents whose names I'm not at liberty to reveal. I asked for Coca-Cola. He served it without batting either an eyelid or me, and apologised for not being in full top-to-toe leathers: 'It gets too damn hot tending bar in all that stuff'. Real men are queens. Believe me.

We retired to the all-night sauna. This facility in Kerkstraat opens at 11pm when the day-time sauna off the Leidseplein closes. There are only three hours in the day in Amsterdam during which, if you've got £7, you need be deprived of establishments with jacuzzis, swimming pools, internal cinemas, restaurant, and bar serving wine, beer, coffee, tea, spa-water, and free newspapers and mags. Oh, and reading rooms. If you're a gay man, that is. At the all-night, being my own poltergeist, I managed to get locked in a lavatory from which I had to be

released, after yelling, by the bar-staff; opened an emergency exit door by mistake which set off sirens; and lost my locker-key, which means you aren't allowed out till closing time at 8am. Woody Allen at the baths.

To recover, we followed a fine old Parliamentary fact-finding trip tradition the next afternoon, and entered a male brothel on Voorburgwal. 'Mrs Thatcher wouldn't allow this, would she?' the barhop immediately asked in flawless English. I thought he meant the glass of beer we were having at 4.30pm and perhaps he did. But he could have meant the TV set within eye-shot of all customers which, as in Paris bars, runs 'explicit' videos. Or the young men who drifted meaningfully to and fro — £45 for an hour of their time in a 'relax room', clean line and towels provided, all 'boys' given regular medical check-ups — until they realised we were British journalists not American and therefore (a) wouldn't have the money (b) wouldn't have the nerve, and (c) wouldn't have learnt enough from Barney Hayhoe's Aids-information programme to know 'safer sex' from a UK television licence reminder.

It was all getting too much for me. I think it was the sight of a policeman sitting peacefully in his shirt-sleeves at the bar of the sixth gay club we entered that sent me back to our gay hotel — breakfast from 8am to 1pm — to lie in a shaded room with a wet facecloth over my forehead and the Hague edition of the *International Herald Tribune*. I read there that Cees de Rhoddes, Amsterdam police commissioner, is willing to mobilise 5,500 cops should his city be lucky enough to get the 1992 Olympic Games, instead of Amsterdam's usual summertime 3,500. Meanwhile, Graham Trevis, of West Midlands police, is promising the IOC 'more than 100,000 members of British police forces, including special anti-terrorist units' if Birmingham gets the Games. Please, gods on Olympus, let Birmingham lose.

Quite carried away, one of my political correspondent acquaintances bought himself a gay video in the duty-free shop at Schiphol airport. An hour and a half later he had it removed from him by Customs officers at Heathrow. Why Margaret Thatcher should desire a return to Victorian values is a mystery to some of us. What return?

Andrew Lumsden



KILROY WAS HERE

ROBERT Kilroy-Silk's exit from politics — with 'News International' emblazoned across his T-shirt — has ensured a messy by-election that the Liberals have an outside chance of winning, despite Labour's 17,000 majority. IAN WILLIAMS reports on the state of Knowsley Labour Party

HIS EXIT could have been collaboratively scripted by Jeffrey Archer and Derek Hatton as a festschrift for the Alliance. This was no deposition, but an abdication for the sake of a love affair — with himself. The launch of a book on the far Left menace just before the Party Conference, clearly decided some time in advance, and acceptance of Rupert Murdoch's money for serial rights wasn't the act of someone who wanted a career with Labour.

He can play rough under pressure. Ian Brandeis, a Merseyside freelance reporter working mainly for Fleet Street tabloids, broke, in *Today*, the news of Kilroy-Silk's book. The night before publication of the story, 26 May, Kilroy-Silk phoned Brandeis and told him that the *Today* story — of which he had been told by the paper — would ruin 'a big deal' for the book. Brandeis says he threatened to phone the Fleet Street editors for whom he worked to tell them he was untrustworthy.

Deserted constituents, his supporters, and Neil Kinnock all have legitimate reasons for doubting that confirmation of his TV job was as late as he claimed. The BBC occasionally has screen tests for potential employees, but pilot programmes are to test the programmes, not the presenters. BBC sources say he only went public when he did because their press people couldn't hold the line in the face of press speculation following the pilot.

His ambitions for high office, and his smooth, handsome articulacy was the immediate butt of attacks from Militant who only allow such qualities under licence from

themselves, while his move southwards to Buckinghamshire was a godsend for them.

But his selection by party headquarters for the new seat of Knowsley North was not just unpopular for personal reasons. The re-organisation which gave him a safe seat had wiped out the safe Toxteth constituency for which Tony Mulhearn, a founder of the Militant tendency, was Prospective Parliamentary Candidate.

With Terry Fields ensconced in Broadgreen, the only safe Liverpool seats were occupied by left-wing MPs, whom the tendency would have been cynically happy to ditch, but against whom they couldn't build the type of Broad Left opposition which the SDP defectors had provoked earlier. And they

needed support against the threat of expulsion.

Kilroy-Silk was not exceptionally right wing. He wasn't traditional lobby fodder, and in some respects, as with his flood of parliamentary questions, he was probably hyper-active. But a case was easily made that he was a dilettante carpet-bagger, exploiting nationally prominent causes at the expense of his constituents.

Machine politics

Knowsley North is essentially Kirkby, Liverpool's massive planning disaster of overspill housing. It was the deprived model for 'Z Cars' over 20 years ago, and every form of social deprivation has increased exponentially since then.

Both the old Kirkby and the new Knowsley District Council had been under uninterrupted Labour control, with what one Labour councillor described as 'institutionalised corruption'. Scandals as big as ski slopes were common.

Liverpool's personnel chair, Derek Hatton, a Knowsley sinecurist, soon had around 10 Knowsley councillors working for Liverpool City Council, and maintained 'close friendships' with others. As one cynical councillor said 'If Labour in Liverpool has been Left, with a whiff of corruption, then in Knowsley it's been a stench of corruption with the merest whiff of Left politics.' Indeed, many of the allegations of funny business in Liverpool were linked with the 'Knowsley Connection'.

A lot of the dubious affiliations

which doubled the size of the Knowsley North constituency General Committee came from Liverpool Council union branches, but Mulhearn's supporters were far from assured of success. Kilroy-Silk was getting not dissimilar affiliations from unions like the EETPU. Keva Coombes, then leader of Merseyside County Council, possibly stood a better chance, and may well have provided more serious competition if the National Executive hadn't frozen the selection last November.

In contrast to Kilroy-Silk, both Frank Field in Birkenhead and Sean Hughes in Knowsley South fought back on their home ground. They lived in the constituencies, built support and membership in the wards, and were able to identify and defeat Militant's attacks. Knowsley North constituency officers actually commissioned an audit into Knowsley South's Labour Clubs which was only discovered when the auditor sent the bill to Sean Hughes! The one definite complaint which Kilroy-Silk has made is that Labour HQ at Walworth Road has taken its time over cleaning up the delegations and selection procedure. But Mulhearn's expulsion, and Keva Coombes' selection for Hyndburn left him alone on the frozen shortlist, while as a double indemnity many of the union delegates whose credentials he had complained of had been rescinded by their unions.

The only possible obstacle to his successful reselection was Jim Lloyd, leader of Knowsley Council, who had been validly nominated but who had pulled out, and so might have thought he had some residual claim to the seat. It was said of him that if he won it would be the first deselection by someone to the right of the incumbent.

Jim Lloyd's position illustrates the complexities of Knowsley politics. The man who sold Cantril Farm council estate to the privatised Stockbridge Trust, and frequent welcomer of Heseltine, owes his position as leader to Militant nomination and support, while Hatton personally proposed him for a series of lucrative jobs on the successor bodies to the County Council.

Carpet baggers unite!

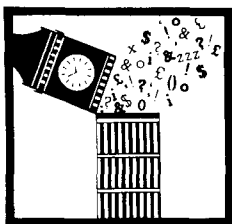
Another candidate hovering about anxiously who should make the comrades eat their words about carpet-bagging is Euro MP Les Huckfield, who has been loudly supporting Militant and attacking the party's national leadership.

But councillor Peter Fisher, who won a two-to-one victory as Labour Against Militant in May's council elections, has pledged that if either of them or anyone similar were to be selected, he would stand on the Anti-Militant ticket. There is every indication that he would win handsomely, and even whispering that the Liberals' likely candidate, Rosemary Cooper, would be loath to oppose him.



'Roger Moore eat your heart out' © Times Newspapers, 1986

City Syndication



The frustration dream, or what did you do in the House, daddy?

'ARE WE THERE yet, or is this a dream?' asked my five-year-old son, half asleep after a tedious evening journey. The question reminded me of the Labour Party. Indeed the very idea of the frustration dream (and of Murphy's Law too) must have been invented with the Labour Party in mind.

We are riding high in the polls, the government is in chaos over South Africa, industrial policy and unemployment; the two Davids are scratching each other's eyes out. At last the prospect of power is within our grasp and not just our reach. No sooner is one savouring the thought of life without her than the apparition of a Golding or a Kilroy-Silk appears intoning 'seven more years hard opposition'.

My son has also just discovered that while I work (quite hard) I do not seem to have a proper job. I tell him in the evening that I have to go and vote. 'Did you win, daddy?' I'm eagerly asked next morning. 'No', I tell him. 'But you never win, daddy, it's not fair.' Then neither is life.

Still it could be worse, and in the Labour Party that is saying a great deal. Much, much worse. I do not forget the conversation I had with Bill Taylor, my Blackburn agent, on 10 June 1983, the day after the party's most catastrophic defeat.

We were recovering from the shock of having survived (boundary changes had made my seat marginal) while so many had been mown down: and we wondered whether we would ever see a majority Labour government in our lifetime again. The odds, we concluded, were against and very long. In the polls Labour stayed behind the Tories throughout 1983, in all but two months of 1984, and right up to March 1985. Today we have broken through the 40 per cent barrier. The transformation in the party's fortunes, not just in the three years since the general election but in the 17 months since the end of the miners' strike, has been quite remarkable. This would not have happened without the single-minded leadership and determination of Neil Kinnock.

FOR A START there is the whiff of victory in the air: the party now fancies a win. Activists are discovering the joys of campaigning. We know where the marginal seats are and talk to the candidates. Robin Cook even writes to them once a week. Nothing more powerfully conveys the change, almost the metamorphosis, of the Labour Party than to compare the visual image of the Freedom and Fairness campaign with the dismal graphics of 'Think Positive, Act Positive, Vote Labour' that was our apology for a theme at the last election.

Much of the work may have been in the re-

discovering-the-wheel category, but it had to be done. Before 1984, for example, there was no systematic co-ordination of local election campaigns, no standing arrangements for parliamentary by-elections. Fulham was a great result (and far more significant than Newcastle-under-Lyme): on local election night, 8 May, we were first with our computer prediction of what the results would mean at a general election; we made a net gain of 485 seats (including two from the Alliance).

This time last year, as the Commons broke up for the summer recess, we were still smarting from our failure (through unexplained absences) to defeat the government in its Top Salaries award,

JACK STRAW MP

despite a sizeable Tory rebellion. Michael Cocks will get a well deserved place in history as the man who from 1976-79 kept the last Labour government afloat without any visible means of support. But nine years as Chief Whip was enough for anyone. His successor, Derek Foster, is one of the unsung successes of the last year. Increasingly under Foster Labour has been taking the opportunities of opposition, and using them. Oral questions, demands for statements, and emergency debates are much better co-ordinated.

Westland may have been handed to us on a plate, but Leyland certainly was not. With a majority of 150 against us, and a government hell-bent on privatisation, Austin Rover could easily have been sold to Ford, Leyland Trucks to General Motors, the deal signed before it was made public. It was brilliant tactical teamwork, led by John Smith, that opened up the opportunities on Leyland, fuelled the neuroses of Midlands' Tories, and forced a double defeat on the government. And even with their 150 majority we beat them in the lobbies on the Shops Bill and on corporal punishment, too.

WE CANNOT WIN without Tory rebels. But what we can do is dictate the political agenda. There, perhaps, our record is a more patchy one, especially and, paradoxically, on the crucial issue of the economy. The Conservative record is truly appalling, and yet they seem to get away with it. There are some key facts with which we should be slaughtering them: 6.2 per cent growth in output in six years (1979 to 1985), the worst of any of the major seven OECD countries, worse than socialist France, chaotic Italy, half that of Canada and the US, a quarter that of Japan. Manufacturing: the worst again,

down 5.2 per cent; in the US it is up 16 per cent; even in Italy it is up 2 per cent.

UK unemployment in 1979 was only marginally above average for the OECD seven (5 per cent against 6.8 per cent); probably below that average if we had fiddled the figures 16 times like Norman Tebbit and Lord Young. Canada, the US, France and Italy all had worse rates than we. Now we are the world leader of the major OECD seven with a rate at 13.1 per cent, 75 per cent above the OECD average of 7.5 per cent. Even on inflation, on whose altar 10,000 of my constituents have been sacrificed, the Tories' record is in truth unimpressive. Comparatively it is worse than Labour's, and in an open world market it is the comparisons that count. In 1979 our rate was just 22 per cent above the average for the OECD seven; in 1985 it was 60 per cent above.

I AM NO FAN of Ronald Reagan, least of all on foreign and defence policy. But Reagan has shown that Keynes was right. Nine million jobs in the US have been created on the back of fiscal expansion and government deficit. In US Treasury Secretary James Baker and his call for international reflation we have an improbable but most effectively for our campaign to show that there is an alternative.

If we can put more punch into our economic policy we should be able to overcome what the Tories see as our Achilles heel — public spending. John MacGregor, UK Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has done us a favour by his premature assault on our spending plans. The plans should be bullet-proof by the election.

But there are still bullets to be bitten on the exchange rate, exchange controls, and on taxation. If Nigel Lawson cuts income tax to 26p next March, we cannot sit on our hands. *We should vote against.*

What of those other recurrent themes of Labour's frustration dream — defence, and the Militant?

On defence, remarkable work by Denzil Davies — and Denis Healey — means that we will have a coherent policy, and one which should command support. As to the Militant, they have effectively written themselves out of the script. The Knowsley North by-election will be a diversion, but no worse. And when I next have to explain the word 'spoil' to my five-year-old son I will tell him the parable of Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk, who took away his bat and ball when he could not be Prime Minister at 44. □

*Jack Straw is Labour MP for Blackburn and a front bench spokesman on Environment.
Peter Kellner is on holiday.*

DON'T LET YOUR MONEY FALL INTO THE WRONG HANDS



Photo: Chris Davis

As consumers, we're told we have the power to change the world. 'Boycott this, don't buy that.' JOHN RENTOUL provides a whistle-stop tour of tainted goods and asks if it makes any difference anyway. Next week, investor-power: he advises who to bank with — new students, please note — and how to invest ethically

CAPITALISM doing what it does — distancing people from the moral consequences of their actions — Puritans of the Left can only logically become hermits.

Those of a less puritanical bent, but eager to do the right thing in a dilettantish way, hesitate — their trolley blocking the aisle — over 'Produce of More Than One Country'. And what do you do when Cape's summer World Apple Monopoly is broken — by Chilean Granny Smiths?

First, let us examine our motives. Do we boycott apartheid, animal products, the *Sunday Times* or Japanese cars because we don't want to have 'blood on our hands', or because we want to bring pressure to bear? A personal decision not to buy leather isn't going to force Global Abattoirs and Tanneries Inc to pull out of the slaughterhouse business.

Consumer boycotts that are going to change the world have to be focused and well-publicised. They need to be supported by a campaign for a simple objective, like getting Sainsbury's and Tesco's to refuse to stock South African goods, and they need to be called off when the objective is achieved.

Some pressure groups don't think consumer boycotts work, but for those of you who like to make shopping a political activity I've listed (opposite) a selection of the 'worst offender' consumer products according to what you're trying to avoid — if consumer action is feasible. There isn't space to list all the products of all

the companies involved in, for instance, South Africa. Some give rise to dilemmas: should you boycott the *Observer* because its owner, Lonrho, employs 11,000 workers in South Africa, 150 of them below the European Community Code level? Or should you buy it because it's probably the most left-wing (and that's not saying much) of the Sunday papers?

Contract compliance

The next step is to use collective spending power to influence the companies consumerism can't reach. The GLC led the way in British 'contract compliance', and the Inner London Education Authority continues the vital work. Eighteen months on and Rowntree Mackintosh and its KitKats are still not on the approved list, because it refuses to supply details of its equal opportunities practice so that the ILEA can confirm that it's within the law.

So far, 26 companies have refused to co-operate — although the Japanese copier company Nashua Copycat is now in talks about getting on the approved contractors list. Written agreements have been signed with 160 companies promising to improve aspects of their employment practices. So far only three of ILEA's 500 suppliers have been found to comply in full with both the Commission for Racial Equality's and the Equal Opportunities Commission's codes of practice

for meeting the requirements of the Race Relations and Sex Discrimination Acts.

At Labour's October conference a motion will be debated calling for a Labour government to enforce 'contract compliance'. So far only a tiny fraction of the £5 billion purchasing of local councils is 'screened', but if the £82 billion of central government and nationalised industry spending could be used to harness market forces, the Age of Consumerism would really have arrived.

YES, BOYCOTTS DO WORK

MULTINATIONAL corporations ought to be alarmed by the success of consumer pressure groups, according to a briefing written by a private American monitoring service, obtained by the NS.

In Bulletin no 86-22 International Organizations Monitoring Service of New York reports gloomily on a series of spectacular coups won by consumer lobbies on baby foods, tobacco and drugs at the UN

What's your poison?

South Africa. Half of British companies on the Stock Exchange (by value) 'have links with South Africa'. Twelve British companies employ more than 5,000 people in South Africa directly or through subsidiaries or associates (an arbitrary cut-off which catches two-thirds of the employees of some 200 companies in all). *Consolidated Goldfields* (94,000), *Barclays* (26,000), *Standard Chartered* bank (23,000), *ICI* (17,000), *Lonrho** (11,000), *Courtaulds* (8,000), *Pilkington Bros** (8,000), *Unilever* (7,000), *BET** (7,000), *BTR**, *Shell*, *BOC* (each 6,000). Given the difficulty of focusing on such diffuse targets, it's often argued that boycott pressure should be brought to bear on those companies that don't even satisfy the conservative requirement for 'constructive engagement' because they underpay their Black workers. Those starred above pay over 100 Black workers less than the European Community Code level, although worst offender is *Pritchard Services* (now part of Hawley), which underpays 1,900 workers. *BET*, a conglomerate once called British Electric Traction (underpaying 700), has the most consumer products vulnerable to pressure: *Rediffusion*, *Argus Books*, *Slimming* magazine, *Advance* laundry. *BTR*, once British Tyre and Rubber (underpaying 300), is responsible for *Pretty Polly* tights and *Dunlop*, *Slazenger* and *Puma* sports goods. The South African connection should reinforce campaigns in local councils against *Pritchard's* privatisation contracts, and councils are also the most effective way to bring pressure on *Consolidated Goldfields'* *Amey Roadstone* construction company and *Pilkington Bros*, maker of *Triplex* glass (underpaying 1,300).

Human rights. When it comes to boycotting countries, rather than companies, South Africa is not the only wickedness in the world. But not only is apartheid a unique oppression, it is the human rights violator most open to consumer pressure. Charles Humana, in his *World Human Rights Guide* (Economist Publications, £19.95), compiles an 'index' combining 40 counts ranging from sexual equality to torture. The five with worse scores than South Africa are (from bad to worse) *Romania*, *USSR*, *Iraq*, *N. Korea* and *Ethiopia*. Another eight which, in the absence of full information are classified as 'BAD', have little or no trade in consumer goods. Chile ranks above E. Germany, Pakistan, Cuba, China and Libya, among others.

Arms trade. The Campaign Against the Arms Trade used to urge a boycott of *Thorn EMI*, but decided that other forms of action had more effect. Most electronics companies have defence contracts, so perhaps pressure should be put instead on people not to do defence-related work. *Exchange Resources* (0225-69671) is a job agency for those, especially scientists and computer experts, who want to move to jobs not involving military contracts.

Tory backers. The Top Ten are *British and Commonwealth Shipping* (£74,500), *Taylor Woodrow* (£65,000), *Hanson Trust* (£60,000), *Allied Lyons* (£57,000), *London and Northern* (£57,000), *AGB Research* (£50,000), *Guardian Royal Exchange* (£50,000), *United Biscuits* (£49,500), *Northern Engineering* (£45,000), *Robert McAlpine* (£43,000). As an example of what boycotters are up against, *Allied Lyons* is responsible for: *Long Life*, *Ind Coope*, *Skol*, *Babycham*, *Lambs Navy*, *Romanoff*, *Teachers*, *Harveys*, *Victoria Wines*, and on licence *Castlemaine XXXX*, *Lowenbrau*, *Canadian Club*, *Cointreau*, *Courvoisier*, *Remy Martin*. Plus *Lyons* and *Tetley* beer, tea, cakes and ice cream. Perhaps it'd be better to buy a share and complain at the AGM, and to join the campaign to persuade companies to conduct 'political fund ballots' of their shareholders.

Union busters. You will not, of course, be buying *Rupert Murdoch's* newspapers. But you should also avoid *Silentnight* beds: its millionaire Tory owner *Tom Clarke* sacked his workforce last year for asking for more. Unfortunately, the *Low Pay Unit* doesn't target low-paying companies.

Third World exploitation. Several small food shops and co-ops apply 'ethical' criteria to their stocks — such as the *Daily Bread* wholefoods co-op in Northampton, putting Christian principles into practice. Apart from *Oxfam* and *War on Want*, *Traidcraft* leads the way in importing things like *Nicaraguan* coffee (*Kingsway*, *Gateshead* NE11 0NE); or contact 'ethical' wholesalers *Community Foods* (Unit 1, Industrial Park, Brunswick Park Rd, London N11) for retailers in your area.

Animal testing. Apart from the rising tide of vegetarianism, the main pressure for animal rights is through cosmetics (animal testing of drugs and food additives is harder to attack). For those of you engaged in sinful self-decoration, *Beauty Without Cruelty*, *Fabergé*, *Yardley* and the *Body Shop* are all right. If you must use soap (most of which contains tallow), use the *Body Shop's*. The *British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection* will supply a full list of ideologically OK suppliers (SAE to 16a Crane Grove, London N7 8LB).

Tobacco. Because the market for cigarettes doesn't have much of a future, tobacco companies have diversified, making it nearly impossible to avoid their goods. *Imperial*, which makes *Embassy* and *Players*, was already responsible for most of the alcohol not already listed under *Allied Lyons* (above), plus *Ross and Young's* frozen food and *Golden Wonder*. Now it's been taken over by *Hanson Trust*, which gives £60,000 a year to the Tories and adds boycottable *Ever Ready* batteries to the list as well as unboycottable bricks. Consumer pressure is perhaps better applied to the *BBC* (and *ITV*) to enforce the voluntary agreement between the government and the tobacco companies. Sports sponsorship associates tobacco with glamour, success and fitness, all expressly forbidden under the codes. More details from *ASH* (Action on Smoking and Health), 5 Mortimer St, London W1.

World Health Organisation (WHO) in May.

It tells its clients that the World Health Assembly (WHO's annual policy meeting) 'was the most significant in recent memory because it demonstrated clearly the growing influence and sophistication of industry critics led by the International Organisation of Consumers Unions (IOCU)'.

The Bulletin confirms that well-organised consumer boycotts do work and that multinational companies are terrified of them. And it urges client corporations to get their act together. 'The largest [tobacco] companies, particularly those involved in soft drinks and other food products likely to be targeted for action in the near future, would be wise to set up early warning systems and prepare management strategies now.'

Reporting the tobacco resolution, which condemns the promotion of tobacco, recognises the rights of 'passive smokers' (non-smokers in smoke-filled rooms) and calls on governments to ban smoking in public places, the Bulletin argues that the universal medical consensus about the dangers of tobacco means that 'defending smokers' rights may be a lost cause around the world'.

It notes that the WHO decision might not hit profits 'because there is huge pent-up demand particularly in developing countries for the high quality tobacco products so far available only in the West'. But it suggests that 'in the end, making money through an activity that carries widely expressed disapproval may prove too much for the nerves of even tobacco companies'.

And if the moral pressures don't succeed, it warns that 'the problems will go well beyond tobacco products. Individual tobacco-product multinationals will be targeted by activists for boycotts of their non-tobacco products.' It cites (naming no names) the example of the *Nestlé* boycott: 'For instance, infant foods companies targeted for boycotts by activists found that unacceptable damage was being inflicted to their public image regarding other products [that is, *Nescafé*]. They finally had to bow to most activist demands.'

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The baby milk campaign is a model of a successful consumer boycott. Organised by the International Nestlé Boycott Committee, it forced the company to agree to stop giving free samples of dried milk to mothers in the Third World. Free samples had been discouraging breastfeeding. The boycott was called off in September 1984 (so you can buy Blend 37 again, subject to ideological requirements to use Nicaraguan instant and snobbery about the expensive accessories of 'real' coffee).

According to the Baby Milk Action Coalition Nestlé is still breaking the code; for example in the Philippines, but is now much better than the other companies in the British market. The campaign is now concentrating on watching for abuses and lobbying international bodies, such as the successful lobbying of the WHO Assembly. It passed a surprise resolution which made the 1981 voluntary code on advertising and promoting dried milk compulsory.

The multinationals' Bulletin applauds the US delegation's tough stand against the resolution, which persuaded six countries to abstain (only the US voted against), and — the Assembly's 'most interesting feature' — its decision for the first time to lobby other delegations. But it berates the babyfoods industry for letting the consumer pressure groups walk all over them, at WHO and in the European Community. 'The expert opinion offered by sources is that the industry lobby did not get the right advice in handling the situation within Europe and is still not getting the right advice on how to handle the WHO.'

The Bulletin also urges multinationals to fight back on the drugs resolution to restrict the promotion and sale of 'irrational drugs' (medicines, especially cough and cold remedies, which contain drugs with counteracting effects). Once the 'ethical criteria for drug promotion' are drawn up, says the report, the Assembly is more or less committed to enforcing them. 'To expect anything else would be wishful thinking', the Bulletin stresses. 'Therefore, the importance cannot be overstated of thorough preparations by industry for participation in the various expert groups to be set up.'

The Bulletin deplores the 'creeping process' over the last decade by which the WHO is being turned from a health affairs talking shop into a 'regulatory agency for international business' and concludes:

The activists were an insignificant force just five years ago. Judging from their growth and the support for them, they are here to stay and will be a much more serious international force in the future. It would be unwise to expect that the international activists will fade away as the Naderites appear to have done in the US. That will not happen because the UN is already well on the way to relying on nongovernmental activist groups as allies in monitoring implementation of its regulations.

The lessons are that lobbying at the UN level works, although it needs to be supported by good quality grass-roots campaigning and research. □

Baby Milk Action Coalition, 34 Blinco Grove, Cambridge CB1 4TS, phone Patti Rundall 0223-210094.

SIX MINISTERS 'LOSE THEIR SEATS'

When opinion polls are said to give or not to give Labour 'an overall majority', they don't take into account local factors in marginal seats — which operate in Labour's favour, according to ROBIN COOK MP

THOSE OF US who earn our wholemeal bread through the ballot box find the task made all the more interesting by suspense as to what an increasingly fickle electorate will do next. The suspense is fed, though not relieved, by interim election results which we now compulsively assemble and reassemble in the hope that the jigsaw will help us peer into the future.

The latest pieces now marshalled for inclusion are the ward-by-ward aggregates by constituency of this May's local election results. Not every seat lends itself to the treatment. There is for instance the dubious practice of the Liberals in David Steel's home constituency of maintaining a cosy majority of card-carrying Liberals on Borders Region offering themselves to the electors as Independents. Discounting such misleading contests, we are still left with around 270 seats for which we have meaningful results.

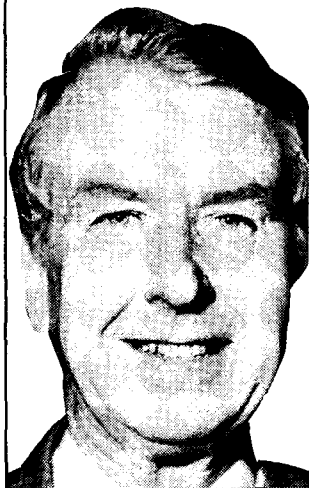
The first and most pleasing conclusion

that leaps out from the list is that Labour did very well indeed last May. The seats where it is possible to derive constituency totals are largely confined to London, the met counties and Scotland, where Labour already holds most of its possible seats and where room for further improvement is limited. Figures for most shire constituencies are too patchy, although it is among them that most of Labour's target seats are to be found.

So only 56 of Labour's target seats appear on the table, but despite this restricted opportunity Labour did succeed in registering 47 'gains' where it secured a majority of the popular vote. Hayes and Harlington is won with an 18 point lead from the Conservatives, and Leeds West is won by exactly the same margin from the Liberals. This has the pleasing effect of removing from British politics the blight of the noxious Terry Dicks, Hayes and Harlington MP, who recently congratulated

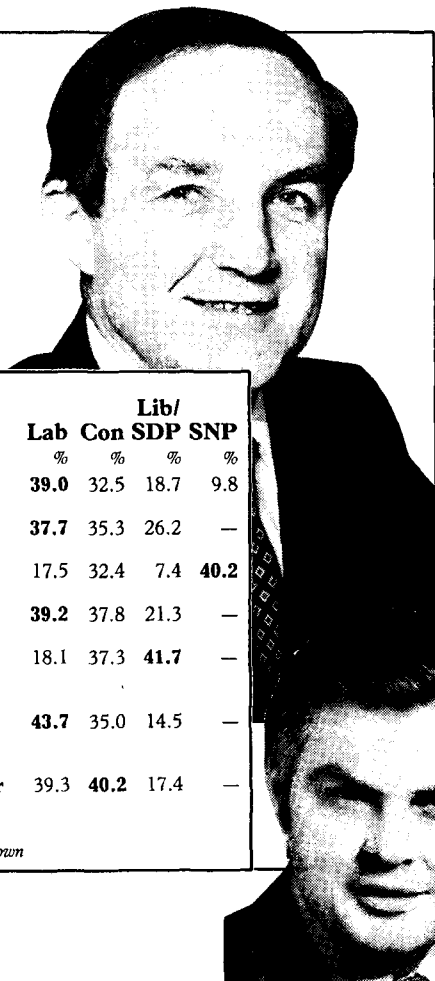
Tory ministers at risk

*Percentage vote
in May 1986 local
elections*



(1)	Lib/			
	Lab	Con	SDP	SNP
	%	%	%	%
George Younger (Ayr)	39.0	32.5	18.7	9.8
Peter Walker (Worcester)	37.7	35.3	26.2	—
Peter Fraser (Angus E)	17.5	32.4	7.4	40.2
Peter Bottomley (Eltham)	39.2	37.8	21.3	—
Norman Lamont (Kingston on Thames)	18.1	37.3	41.7	—
Angela Rumbold (Mitcham and Morden)	43.7	35.0	14.5	—
Margaret Thatcher (Finchley)	39.3	40.2	17.4	—

NB: Other parties not shown



Labour's new target seats

(2)

	Lab %	Con %	Lib/ SDP %
Crawley	46.7	32.3	21.0
Finchley	39.3	40.2	17.4
Burton*	41.3	38.8	19.9
South Ribble*	39.6	37.0	23.3
Staffs SE	44.3	42.5	9.2
Wellingborough*	44.2	41.2	14.0
Lancaster*	39.7	36.3	24.0
Mid Worcs	43.6	39.7	14.5
Worcester	37.7	35.3	26.2

*1985 shire elections

NB: Other parties not shown

Labour's best performing target seats

(3)

	85/86 Lab vote %	85/86 Con vote %
The Wrekin	60.7 (+24.0)	31.7 (-7.3)
Newport W	59.5 (+22.9)	32.4 (-5.6)
Basildon	59.2 (+23.6)	21.2 (-17.5)
Bradford N	52.2 (+21.3)	26.4 (-7.9)
Corby	56.8 (+20.7)	38.1 (-4.5)
Harlow	52.8 (+18.6)	24.0 (-17.1)

Ranked by the increase in the Labour vote 1983 to 1985/6 less the two-party swing required to take the seat.

Figures in brackets indicate change from 1983

1983.

The new running order shows that Labour's recovery has been particularly strong in new-town seats (Table 3). These are the very constituencies in which Labour paid such a heavy and unexpected price in 1983 for appearing out of touch with the aspirations of a younger and upwardly mobile population.

It also reveals a stonger than average recovery for Labour in seats with substantial employment on military contracts, such as Barrow, Gravesham and Stevenage, all of which have made healthy strides up the list. It has been suggested that this merely proves that their electors have a shrewd appreciation that their local authority doesn't order many defence components and that it is therefore safe for them to vote Labour, but even on that canny interpretation the figures reveal an underlying propensity to vote Labour on which we can build, if we meet local anxieties about continuing employment under Labour.

The third conspicuous trend among the target seats is that Labour's recovery has been more marked where Labour did worst in 1983. The rise in the Labour vote is greatest in the target seats of Eastern and Southern Regions, in both cases over 13 points. It is almost as good in the East Midlands where the rise in the Labour share of the vote was 12.9 points, confounding the gloomy predictions of our well-wishers among the pundits who half-expected, half-hoped that the controversy in

the Malaysian government on its robust sentencing policy.

Interestingly the figures confirm that electors are more willing to turn to Labour where they sense it has a realistic prospect of winning. In the local elections of 1986 the swing to Labour was 1.8 per cent higher than the national average among our target seats as a block, and spectacularly higher in individual cases such as Dudley West and Croydon North West which both register a 17 point gain in the Labour vote. This trend offers the comforting message that the familiar exercise of translating national opinion polls into a notional parliamentary balance of seats may understate Labour's likely gains as it does not allow for the premium of the added swing to Labour in our target seats.

Some gains occur in seats which are not

conventionally regarded as Labour hopefuls. With just a little cannibalising of 1985 figures for wards that did not contest in 1986, it's possible to cobble together constituency totals for Mid-Worcestershire and Staffordshire South East, where Labour wins both seats, despite Conservative majorities of over 10,000 in 1983. Such advances have produced a number of seats which have since been recruited to Labour's list of Target Seats (Table 2).

For the purposes of evaluating Labour's recovery it's reasonable to treat 1985 and 1986 local results as broadly comparable since support for Labour was running at about 37 per cent in the opinion polls for May in both years. It is therefore possible to reorder the Target List to reflect Labour's recent electoral performance in 1985 and 1986, instead of its lack of performance in

A Macmillan nurse needs more than dedication to care for the victims of cancer.

cont'd
basically.
As a Macmillan nurse my job is to help people live with advanced cancer, in their own homes when ever possible.
You can't imagine how rewarding it is to see someone who has previously been in too much pain to leave their bed, out gardening or shopping.
Or to be able to give reassurance about the fears and anxieties that may have been bottled up for many months.
And to have time to listen to patients and their families to share their sorrows and joys.
As Macmillan nurses, we're very privileged, because we can share so much with so many people.

There are still many thousands of cancer victims who have to suffer the pain and anxiety of this cruel disease without the care of a Macmillan nurse. But you can begin to ease their pain, simply by sending a donation to Major HCL Garnett CBE, Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund, 15/19 Britten Street, London SW3 3TY. Tel: 01-351 7811.

Name _____

Address _____

Cancer Relief
Macmillan fund

NSIA

Registered as the National Society for Cancer Relief Regd. No. 261017

the Notts pits would sink us throughout the region.

ALLIANCE performance does not emerge impressively from contemplation of the 1986 results. These confirm yet again the difficulty for the Alliance in translating isolated breakthroughs in by-elections such as Ryedale into advances on a broader front when the electorate knows it is choosing a local or national administration — even in local elections held on the very same day as Ryedale.

Out of the 270-odd available constituencies, the Alliance could register gains in fewer than a score of seats. Only three of these were Labour seats (Liverpool Broadgreen, Islington South and Bow and Poplar — the last two only by a whisker). Of their 14 gains from the Tories no fewer than 10 are confined to a couple of clusters in sub-regions — North-East Scotland (Banff and Buchan, Moray, Kincardine and Deeside, Angus East and North East Fife) and the Southern suburbs of London (Twickenham, Carshalton, Sutton and Cheam, Kingston-upon-Thames, Richmond and Barnes).

On the downside the Alliance suffered two 'losses' to Labour — Leeds West (Michael Meadowcroft) and Glasgow Hillhead (Roy Jenkins). Particularly embarrassing for the SDP must be the clear evidence that those Labour MPs who defected have failed to leave behind any permanent boost to the Alliance vote and are already forgotten by their local electorate. Thus in Erith and Crayford where James Wellbeloved held 35 per cent of the vote in 1983, the Alliance came in a poor third this May with only 21 per cent. On this basis Labour can be confident of regaining the dozen or more seats where the defection of the sitting Labour MP handed victory to a Tory candidate.

It is of course open to the Alliance to seek the comfort they can't get from the figures in denying that they mean anything. Let me therefore concede, before they write in, that the way in which 45 per cent of the electorate votes for a local councillor does not necessarily tell us how 75 per cent of them will vote for an MP.

And yet these figures are the product of the choice of millions of electors casting real votes in real ballot boxes, and in their own way have a validity of a different kind from a sample thousand electors responding to a hypothetical poll question. We know first-time voters have the lowest propensity to vote, but they are also the very group of the population recording the strongest support for Labour (currently 18 points over the Tories, and 25 points over the Alliance).

However you squint down the microscope the figures present a consistent trend. Labour is on course to form a government after the next general election. With a little extra push in the handful of target seats who did not quite make it, that Labour government could also have a clear majority in parliament. ☐

Research by Rob Clements of the House of Commons Library, working in a personal capacity.



IN THESE DAYS of conspiracy and paranoia, there is a surprising media silence about an organisation which, despite having a public profile lower than the Masons, financed the Lee Jeans dispute, and is at this very moment bankrolling the Silentnight strikers deep in the Pennines. Apart from financing the dispute to the tune of £17,000, one of its affiliates, the Textile Workers, is providing premises for the strike committee while another, the Rossendale Union of Boot, Shoe and Slipper Operatives, is providing office equipment. The connecting feature is not the TUC, but the little known General Federation of Trade Unions which has survived since the turn of the century to provide this tangible solidarity.

Its relative obscurity is a sad end for an organisation which once met on a tripartite basis with the TUC and Labour Party, and which helped initiate the existing international trade union organisations.

Within the GFTU, encapsulated like fossil flies in amber, is an archaeological range of trade unions. Its affiliated membership of 320,000 includes such gems as the London Jewel Case and Jewellery Display Makers Union with 180 members and the Cloth Pressers Society with eleven members. Regrettably the Teston Independent Society of Cricket Ball Makers was bowled out in 1974 for registering its 18 members under Heath's Union Law. But apart from such fissiparous treasures, there's the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union (FTAT) with 58,000 members, the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers with 76,000, and the Hosiery Workers with 53,000. These may not be industrial giants, but they are hardly pigmies either.

The Federation arose from the defeat of the engineers' battle for an eight hour day. The Trade Union Congress was then just that, an annual congress of unions having little back-up or organisation, and it was felt a stronger body was necessary for mutual support against increasingly strong employers. The resolution calling for it was adopted unopposed at the 1898 Congress. Having initiated the GFTU, it took up to the first world war before a revamped TUC decided to unhitch the Federation and usurp some of its functions.

Until 1914, the GFTU played a singularly constructive role. It fostered amalgamations on an industrial basis, and organised federations of, for example, Labourers' Unions, which allowed interchangeability of membership. It co-ordinated negotiations

and above all had a central dispute fund for unions to draw from.

After the war, displaced by the TUC from international councils, it began to extol narrower virtues on the 'small is beautiful' principle. It watched as the general unions which it had helped form, but which had then disaffiliated, swallowed and incorporated small craft and local unions like voracious amoebae. By the Thirties, its 80-year old general secretary was referring to the general unions as no less than fascist!

But between 1970 and 1980 the Federation doubled in affiliated membership. Small and medium-sized unions appreciate the benefit fund, their officials appreciate the pension fund, and all appreciate the national education and research facilities. Above all it is a forum in which the minnows of the movement aren't shoved aside by the whales of the great industrial and general unions.

Many of its affiliates, such as the locksmiths in Willenhall, carpet-workers in Kidderminster, Stoke pottery workers, Lancashire textile workers, and Yorkshire wool workers, are small in national terms, but in these towns, they are *the* union.

The unions' size can't even be correlated with backwardness. The Rossendale Boot, Shoe and Slipper Operatives has a computer and other forms of office automation for their 4,000 members, which is more than many larger unions can claim. Even their social attitudes are forward looking. Representing many women workers, the Dundee Jute and Flax Workers elected a woman as General Secretary back in the '60s, while the biggest affiliate, the Tailors and Garment Workers, has just elected 11 women to its 14-strong executive.

But despite brave claims of independence, the recession is eroding many of the unions, and some traditions of over a century are being subsumed in the large conglomerate unions, neither industrial or general, which now predominate. Behind this is the 'vulture' syndrome. The GFTU has large assets of around £5 million, and there's a suspicion that some affiliates could easily live with dissolution and distribution of its assets.

It is, after all, a federation aimed implicitly at smallish craft and manual unions in a range of industries suffering badly from both economic decline and technological obsolescence. It won't accept affiliates with more than a 100,000 members, or from the civil and public sector.

David Coates, formerly of the affiliated National Union of Funeral Service Operatives, has been campaigning for a broader vision for the Federation. At the informal meeting where he broached the subject, the secretary of the 120-strong Card Setting Machine Tenters' Society, stated that his union foresaw no financial problems. But it seems the GFTU suffers from the common malaise of British trade unionism which combines the knowledge that changes are needed, with a determination to do nothing about it till it's too late.

Ian Williams

Next week: the Co-operative Party

IT'S MUSICAL chairs at Channel 4. Following the departure of one commissioning editor, five of the others are taking on slightly different responsibilities. Such editorial micro-shifts are generally imperceptible and irrelevant to viewers: staff may change, but programme policy seemingly goes on for ever. But one of these changes is intriguing: Caroline Thomson, commissioning editor for finance and industry, takes over responsibility also for technology, engineering, and science. The juxtaposition holds out the promise of new ways of covering science and technology.

Most science broadcasting is lamentably predictable. Post-Chernobyl, it might seem hard to maintain an uncritically celebratory attitude about science and technology: certain current affairs programmes in the past five years or so have become increasingly willing to scrutinise the claims of science, and to examine the side- and after-effects of technology. Yet most programmes from science departments (like *Horizon* and *Tomorrow's World*) still adopt a gee-whiz, enthralled stance to science and technology. As if to illustrate this, along comes a new weekly science and technology series on Channel 4, *Equinox*.

The good thing about *Equinox* is that it will emphasise applied science and technology, and therefore (it's to be hoped) won't depict scientists as pure neutral thinkers, set apart from the human fray. Yet the first in the series, on development of a Formula One turbo engine, seemed seduced by gleaming pistons, and the intricacies of the design legwork. It sketched in none of the background to the new engine: why so much money was being invested in a new racing car, how the technologies involved are applied elsewhere in industry and aerodynamics. The film was hailed in a press release as the story of 'unparalleled technological ingenuity', of the race to get the car racing. It was a toys for the boys



Enthralled by Science

ANNE KARPf

programme.

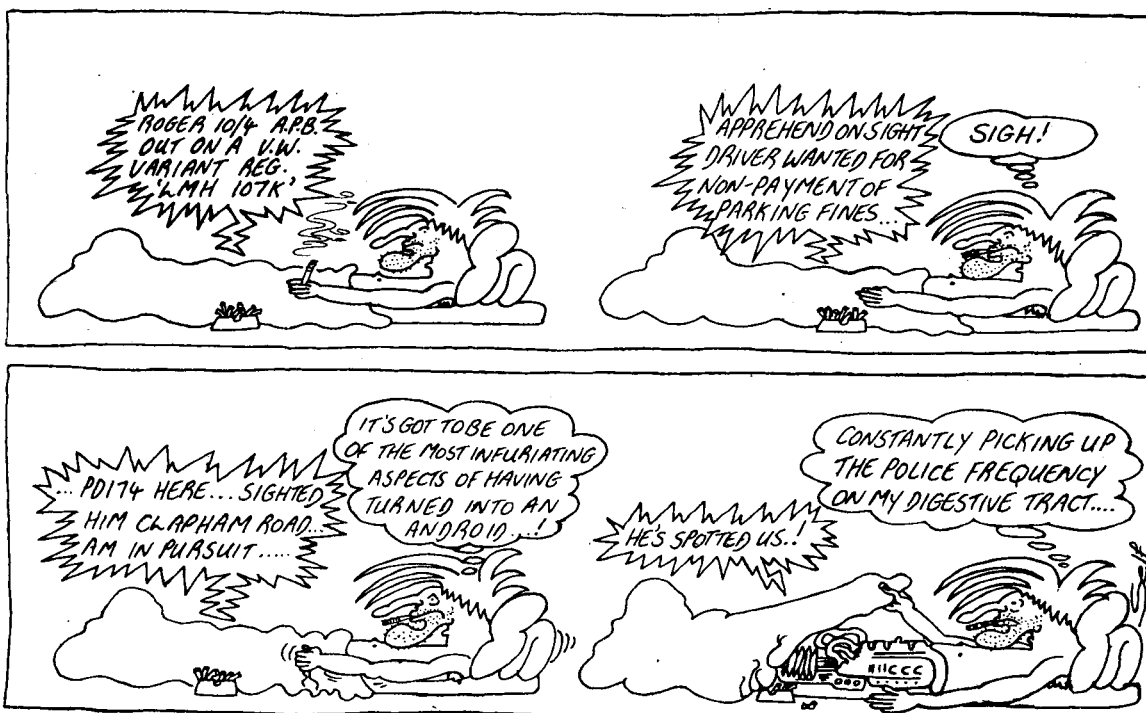
Radio does rather better. Radio 3 recently broadcast two interesting programmes on science and technology in India, and last Monday on Radio 4 a new series called *Science Now* — *In Passing* began, about the scientific institutions in which scientists work, an antidote to the popular image of scientists as lone discoverers, impelled purely by their brainy capacity to invent.

At their worst, programmes on science and technology act as PR for science, accepting scientists' own accounts as privileged information. Where they don't, scientists tend to complain about inaccuracy and misrepresentation. But if broadcasters are generally uncritical about scientific knowledge, it's hardly their fault. Like the rest of us, they live in a culture where positivist ideas about science still prevail: despite all the research and writings over the past 25 years about the social factors influencing science, most of us still view science as uncontaminated by human self-interested or prejudice. Science is neutral, standing above competing interests, the state, or ideology.

In such a climate, it takes guts to examine science economically (on what basis and by whom are funding decisions made?), politically (in whose interests is research conducted, what are its implications, what ideas does it embody?), and socially (how is the community of scientists organised, who do they represent and who is excluded?). And it's all very well attempting such a tough task, but then, goddammit, you've got to get the blighters to watch, listen, and read. To make such an agenda involving and compelling requires television, radio and journalistic skills of the first order: Channel 4's *Crucible* made a brave attempt and was generally thought to have failed.

Failure can have serious repercussions. A recent American book, *Scientists and Journalists* (Free Press) reveals the poor local reporting of Three Mile Island before the 1979 nuclear accident. Reporters who wrote about it had little scientific knowledge and mostly just reported what the utility company running the plant told them about it. They did very few investigative articles (a format rarely applied to science). Only one reporter went to outside sources to help him explain what was happening at the plant. Most of the reporting concentrated on what, rather than why or how. It's futile to speculate on whether different reporting might have alerted the public.

Meanwhile, back at Channel 4, Caroline Thomson is firming up her ideas about the network's science coverage. Perhaps, with her twin responsibilities, she'll encourage programme-makers to see it as a part of finance and industry, with similar imperatives. She says she's interested in giving it a current affairs edge, and in looking at the philosophy and the politics of science. So we'll see more, perhaps, of the social relations of science, and less fetishising of technology, the camera moving lovingly along a row of test-tubes, or held hypnotically before a gee-whiz new machine. □



DIARY

Ben Okri

Someone must have been saying something for, without having done much, I was asked to write this diary. The next day I had to leave for Edinburgh. One of the texts I carried in my head during the trip was James Campbell's *Invisible Country*. I had never been to Scotland before and the most vivid things I knew about the place were the stories that Scottish friends had told me. But nothing they said prepared me for the very perceptible demarcation of terrain once we had entered the Caledonian air. It is another country. The air is sharper. The hills, stark in their solidity, sheer out in the lights. It is a country in which history breathes from the landscapes. My first impression of Edinburgh was of staircases which seemed to have been carved on boulders and cobbled streets which reminded me of secret courtyards in Paris and the South of France. It is a city of the imagination in which dwelled another city of frustrated yearnings. It is impossible to miss the contrast between the architecture of the castles, magnificent and incantatory, and the strange restrained air of the people. I couldn't perceive the connection between the spirits of those who built the castles and those who reside in the city. That is perhaps what Campbell meant when he suggested that authority is absent from Scotland: he meant an ancient authority which continues. This may explain why all the Scots I met dislike Thatcher quite thoroughly.

My Nigerian friend and I wandered that city, in which I would have loved to have spent a few years of my childhood, seared by the haunting melody of bagpipes which sounded like solitary calls to glory and to an old fierce grandeur. It is the only city I know where the old resides so solidly in the new, where the music of the place blasts out its ancient lore amid the living spaces of the inhabitants. What Campbell missed is that while culture, during a time of political impotence, can become kitsch, it can also function as continual declaration and resistance.

I slept for about three hours a night in Edinburgh and drank for something like 12 hours a day. England patronises its adults and treats them as if they cannot handle their drink and sends them home, dissatisfied, at 11 o'clock. In Edinburgh you can drink till 2pm. And yet there seems to me much more violence from closing time in England than in Edinburgh. All I saw in Edinburgh was a man in a crowd kicking a dustbin. In London you see them throwing up at bus stops and on the platforms of the underground stations.

I felt little hostility towards me as a Black person. But then I saw few Black people in Edinburgh. We scanned the buses and the streets hoping to catch sight of Rastafarians: they would be sure signs of a vital Black community. We found none. And the only Black man I saw, apart from those at the

conference, was in a pub. He had a Sony Walkman on. Half a pint of lager stood beside his head, which rested on the table. I woke him and he didn't budge. I wasn't sure whether he was asleep, or completely drunk, or dead.

I owe Scotland a longer visit. Every country tries to conceal its pain: Scotland succeeds less than most. The talk of Independence is very much alive: three days of being there and I was already made aware of what hurt it the most. The ancient pride of the people runs semi-frozen through the streets. Their hills are like pre-historic energies which change the quality of the light around them. When we got back to London it was raining, the sky was drab, and I felt that a unique phase of dreaming was over.

Among the things brought back from the conference in Edinburgh, the most important was a petition from the Commonwealth writers to be delivered to the Prime Minister. It said that if the Prime Minister was not prepared to support the call for sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa — a call already backed by Commonwealth and European countries — then Britain should withdraw from the Commonwealth. The petition was first presented at the ICA on the Friday that Chinua Achebe was in conversation with Nurrudin Farah. Signatures supporting the petition were collected. It was an ideal forum; hundreds of people had turned up to listen to Achebe speak. As it turned out only seven people ended up marching to Downing Street. Among us were Nurrudin Farah, Edward Blishen and Angela Carter. Feeling the unimpressive weight of our numbers we huddled somewhat close together and joked that if Margaret Thatcher looked out of her window she would hardly tremble at us

ROGER WODDIS

The Black Man's Burden

Take up the Black Man's burden
To help the hardest-hit,
And boast that you have shifted
A teeny-weeny bit.
Send forth your secret signals
To friends who fill the dock,
And prove that you're half-hearted
By going off half-cock.

Take up the Black Man's burden,
Be saddened by his pain,
Believing what is moral
Is what you stand to gain.
When faced by Rajiv Gandhi,
Kaunda, Hawke and Co.,
Hold up your crooked finger
And tell them where to go.

Take up the Black Man's burden,
Agree to do a deal
With Krugerrands and tourists,
And coal and iron and steel.
Insist, when token sanctions
In future fail to bite,
That all the world's in error,
And only you are right.

ANOTHER SUICIDE -
DIED OF BOREDOM
WAITING FOR A TRAIN
TO JUMP UNDER



storming her office with our protest. When we got to Downing Street our progress was checked by two policemen. After a moment of uncertainty we presented ourselves and one of the policemen phoned through to 10 Downing Street. And then we were told that only four of us along with a photographer were allowed in. We sorted out which four would present the petition and we were led to the Prime Minister's building. When we got there, the policeman rapped on the door, another policeman opened and took our petition. The photographer recorded the moment and the door was shut. Feeling slightly disillusioned, feeling that the presentation of our petition had been reduced by codes of practice and bureaucracy, we went back to rejoin our colleagues. It wouldn't have mattered, really, if 10,000 people stormed that street. Only five would be allowed in. And that is how those in power never know what those in the streets are feeling.

I was at the *New Statesman* farewell party for Hugh Stephenson when Suzanne Cronje came up to me and told me something which at the time seemed incredible, but which on further reflection does not seem at all unlikely. She said, and she had heard this from good authority, that the South African government believes it has perfected a containable nuclear bomb which it is prepared to drop on Soweto. This might sound wild. But so did the early stories of the gas chambers and concentration camps in Hitler's Germany. The continuing existence of the apartheid regime of South Africa is the greatest contemporary insult to the world. No one should underestimate the ugly tenacity of that regime. The more the foundations tremble, the more desperate their violence will become. And all those who still support that regime out of greed or blindness should remember the words of Victor Hugo: 'Greater than the march of mighty armies, is the idea whose time has come.'

A QUARTER-CENTURY DIVIDED



youth — parade the street or lounge in cafes dressed in the kind of 50s and 60s gear that was in vogue when the wall went up 25 years ago. Many of them will never have been to the other side of the divided city, to East Berlin let alone to East Germany.

Meanwhile films, such as the Billy Wilder classic *One Two Three*, that were shot on location in Berlin just before the wall was built and were subsequently not shown because of their irreverent treatment of divided Berlin are now showing to packed houses in the city. For the inhabitants of West Berlin, the wall is today a fact of life that has become part of the fabric of the city. *'Die Mauer hat sich eingelebt' — the wall has taken root.* It is the frequently heard remark whenever the subject is raised and perhaps for reasons of personal sanity the subject is for the most part ignored.

At best the wall today acts as a giant canvas for the dozens of graffiti artists that have successfully covered most of its surface with acres of paint. At worst, the wall has become a huge tourist attraction. Each day, sightseeing buses disgorge their photo-snapping passengers onto specially built viewing platforms right next to the wall that provide a first hand glimpse of the 'inhuman face of communism' — a view over the wall at the death strip, watchtowers and East German guards with orders to shoot escapers peering back through their fieldglasses.

THIS WEEKEND West Germany's young conservatives are planning to form a human chain along the wall to mark the anniversary. They are hoping to muster up to 100,000 participants, but the chances are that the turnout will be much lower. The young conservatives, members of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrat *Junge Union*, maintain in a leaflet advertising their demonstration that the wall has not lost any of its ability to shock.

The Four Power Agreement of 1972 between the Western allies of Britain, the United States and France, and the Soviet Union, which control the city, has brought stability of a kind to Berlin, removing much of its claim to being a barometer of East-West tensions. In West Berlin attention has focused inwards. Domestic West Berlin politics have become provincial and not without their fair share of corruption. Over the past six years West Berlin has been rocked by a series of bribery and corruption scandals connected with town planning and building projects affecting parties across the political spectrum.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ago on the night of 12 August and into the morning of the 13th, East Germany put more than 20,000 troops and militia into action to begin building the wall. Equipped with thousands of rolls of barbed wire which had previously been bought from the West, they converged on Berlin and sealed off the western sector of the city. The arguments for this drastic measure were from the East German point of view understandable.

East Berlin and the surrounding area of East Germany were then facing an economic

West Berlin

Steve Benbow/Network

Two days after the Wall went up, on 15 August 25 years ago, 300,000 West Berliners marched in angry protest at the forced division of their city. TONY PATERSON reports that today it only brings the young Right onto the streets, and even they don't turn out in the numbers expected. Familiarity breeds hopelessness . . .

WEST BERLIN'S nearest equivalent of London's *City Limits*, the monthly entertainment guide *Zitty*, has devoted its front cover to next week's 25th anniversary of the building of the Berlin Wall. The cover carries a brightly coloured illustration of a giant monument with the inscription '25 years of Berlin Wall' carved into it while the searchlights of East German watchtowers play onto it, implausibly, in the style of the 20th Century Fox film logo.

Outside the offices of this trend-setting publication on West Berlin's brash *Kurfuerstendamm*, its readers — the West Berlin *Chicercia* — or affluent and fashionable

catastrophe. Every year since the founding of East Germany in 1949 more than 200,000 East Germans had voted against the first worker and peasant state on German soil with their feet and left for the West. By August 1961 that figure had reached a total of 2.6 million East German emigrants, most of whom had fled across the open sector border between East and West Berlin.

In East Berlin there were 45,000 jobs vacant while 53,000 East Berliners were daily crossing into West Berlin to work and be paid in hard currency. That summer East Germany's labour shortage was so great that much of the harvest was left rotting on the fields. In short, the country was bleeding to death and the whole concept of East German communism was being dealt a massive propaganda blow.

In January this year the East German leader Erich Honecker was asked by a group of naive-sounding visiting US Congress representatives why the wall could not be pulled down to coincide with the 750th anniversary of the founding of Berlin next year. Honecker replied that this couldn't happen until the circumstances that led to its construction changed.

Although East Germany has made considerable advances over the past 25 years in economic terms, enabling the country to earn the reputation of being the Eastern bloc's most economically successful state (in real terms) its performance can nowhere match that of the land of economic miracle next door.

Since its construction more than 38,000 East Germans have escaped over this wall and the inner German border some 80 miles to the West. Most of these escapes, however, occurred in the years shortly after 1961 when the border fortifications were less thorough. Nowadays the wall has reached a stage of near perfection, accounting for the fact that only 67 people managed to escape last year. The majority of escapes such as the recent stunt pulled off by an East German who claimed to have reached West Berlin by disguising himself as a Soviet soldier are made with the help of professional escape organisations for big money — and in this case an evidently necessary blaze of highly lucrative publicity.

Twenty-five years on, however, relations between East and West Germany have improved to the extent that the vast majority of East Germans who want to emigrate to the West do so on a legal basis. In 1984 a record 40,000 East Germans were allowed to emigrate after Bonn supplied East Berlin with a 1 billion mark hard currency loan. This year, the figure stands at 11,500.

But applying to emigrate remains an arduous business. As soon as the application is lodged with the East German authorities, the individual concerned is normally deprived of their job or place at university and it can often take years before final permission to leave is granted. Then the many and real fears of taking a step into the complete unknown — from where there is no return — crowd in.

Emigration to West Berlin doesn't mean arrival in the promised land. One East Berliner who arrived in the West last month recounts how he was met by two West Berlin youths who suggested he go back as it wasn't as bad in the East as he made out. □

SANCTIONS

THE FIRING LINE

IAN WALKER looks through the holes in Mrs Thatcher's argument against sanctions: that they would most harm the Front Line states

THATCHER'S KEY argument against sanctions is that it will hit the Front Line states hardest. Black leaders say that's for them to judge. But there's no doubt that Pretoria could exact a high price for its neighbours' solidarity with the ANC: the interesting question is whether it will actually do so.

The stakes were outlined in a private speech by Zimbabwe's Finance Minister Bernard Chidzero to CIO (Zimbabwe Intelligence) officers last November, when he talked about the 'umbilical relationship' between landlocked Zimbabwe and South Africa's economy, concluding that:

the imposition of sanctions on South Africa could have different and possibly disastrous effects on Zimbabwe, depending on the nature of sanctions imposed and whether South Africa retaliates or not.

But this week Zimbabwe made its commitment to sanctions clear.

The scale of dependence is indeed frightening. And far from being reduced since Independence in 1980, it has risen. South Africa's skilful destabilisation policy has targeted communications, forcing the Front Line states to use its own trade channels. The rail line through southern Mozambique to Maputo — Zimbabwe's best and cheapest link to the sea — is effectively unusable, thanks to the activities of the Pretoria-backed MNR (National Resistance Movement). Only a permanent (and costly) Zimbabwe army presence keeps open the northern line to Beira. UNITA activity in Angola — also backed by Pretoria — has been similarly debilitating, with the Benguela-Lobito line closed.

Trade is vital to Zimbabwe, with exports at 25 per cent of GDP, and imports (mainly key raw materials and fuels) worth 20 per cent of final consumption in 1984. Over 80 per cent of this trade now uses South African rail and port outlets, compared with only 47 per cent in 1982. South Africa also remains Zimbabwe's main trading partner.

Similarly high dependence characterises the region as a whole. According to a Zimbabwe Promotion Council report (August 1985) 12.5 million tonnes (85 per cent) of the trade of Zimbabwe, Zaire, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho goes through South Africa. Just 1.7 million tonnes goes up to Dar es Salaam, and 0.8 million tonnes through Beira.

The Southern African Development Co-

ordination Conference has made the establishment of independent trade lines its strategic priority. The rail line to Beira ('The Beira Corridor') and the port's facilities are being upgraded at a cost of over \$250 million. But even on the most optimistic assessment it could never handle more than 30 per cent of Zimbabwe's trade (about 15 per cent of the region's total).

SO THERE IS considerable prima-facie evidence that if President Botha chose to retaliate, with counter sanctions, he could do significant damage to his neighbours. But Zimbabwe's official position is that the continuing costs to the Front Line states of South African destabilisation (estimated at \$10 billion since 1980) are now so high that the short-term costs of overthrowing apartheid will quickly be recouped.

No one thinks sanctions can be made effective enough to do the job quickly. If landlocked Rhodesia could maintain commercial relations with at least 60 different states from east and west, north and south, how much easier for South Africa? It is the internal political struggle which will be decisive — and that won't be short.

The official line from Pretoria is that the border might be closed in response to even minimal sanctions, whether or not the Front Line states participate. But in Harare it is thought that Botha is bluffing.

First, trade is a two-way road. Excluding mineral and gem exports, 24 per cent of South Africa's exports go to Africa (1983 figures). So manufacturing and agricultural exporters would oppose closing the border. There's important invisible income from transport and shipping services, and in profits and interest from large South African investments in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe alone has a net annual invisibles deficit with South Africa of over US \$100 million. Zimbabwe government debt to South Africa (a legacy from its Unilateral Declaration of Independence — UDI) of US \$150 million could be written off if Pretoria shut the border.

Most important of all, shutting the border is Pretoria's last card which it will not play until it is desperate. Mugabe will avoid the position of Kaunda during UDI, when Zambia shut the Rhodesian border. If the border were closed by South Africa, Zimbabwe would be the injured party, able to demand both emergency airlifts, and international military support to keep open trade lines through Mozambique. Pretoria would have no interest in upping the stakes so sharply unless sanctions were highly effective — which they won't be.

At best, sanctions will play a supportive role. It may even be true that initially, sanctions will generate a mood of solidarity and resistance among whites. But, sooner or later, they have a morale-sapping effect. They deprive whites of the most important luxury of all — the possibility of easy travel abroad to escape the pressure. And they impose on economic life a system of makeshift arrangements which marks the temporary character of the regime. Combined with the continued pressure of domestic agitation, eventually, inevitably, this works its way into whites' political consciousness and prepares the ground for a settlement. □

LETTERS

20/20 Vision replies

Claudia Milne, Producer, 20/20 Vision

In September 1985, *20/20 Vision* was researching a programme about Soviet bloc covert operations in Britain. This programme was the subject of the article 'Spy trial by television' by Duncan Campbell and others (*NS* 25 July). In the course of it we made contact with a man called Derek Donaldson.

Donaldson had a long criminal record but told us an interesting story: how he had been introduced to a Czech 'diplomat' by a civil servant named Brian Gentleman who had passed over government information; how the diplomat was really an intelligence officer named Colonel Miroslav Merhaut.

We were intrigued by the story but sceptical and set about trying to knock it down, checking every verifiable fact Donaldson had given us. But in every respect his information proved accurate, including an ex-directory M15 telephone number and a secret M15 address which the former M15 officer Cathy Massiter was able to corroborate.

After a series of discussions between ourselves and senior Channel 4 executives, including their lawyer, we came to the conclusion that the only way to corroborate that civil servant Brian Gentleman had been in contact with the Czech Merhaut was through Gentleman himself. It was decided that we would have to use subterfuge in order to get alongside Gentleman. In certain clearly defined circumstances subterfuge is an accepted part of the investigative journalist's trade. This has been upheld time and again by the Press Council. In this case there was uncorroborated evidence that a junior civil servant had passed information to a Soviet bloc intelligence officer. It was clearly a story of major public interest, and there was no other way to get at the truth.

Two members of the production team befriended him and eventually, of his own free will, Brian Gentleman confided how in the summer of 1983 he had given Colonel Merhaut classified information.

On the basis of Gentleman's verbal admissions, which he freely volunteered, a written statement was drawn up by the *20/20 Vision* researchers and, having checked it for accuracy and made corrections, it was sworn by him. His motives in signing his confession were complex. He was desperately worried that either Donaldson would inform on him or that the Czechs would re-establish contact and force him to work for them again.

He wanted to establish his remorse in advance of being caught, thus possibly mitigating his guilt should his activities be detected.

When he confessed to us he had an interest in telling the truth. There was nothing in it for him to lie, or exaggerate, or embellish the facts. Later, when he retracted he had a clear motive for so doing — to avoid prosecution. People have asked why we did not confront Brian Gentleman in the programme. Again it was a difficult decision. Firstly, he might have gone to the police and been charged. Then everything would have been sub judice and his side of the story — how an extremely vulnerable young man had been turned over by Czech professionals — might well have been lost in one of M15's *in camera* prosecutions. Secondly, he might have simply run away. Thirdly, and most importantly, we were acutely concerned that Gentleman might easily consider suicide in the time lag between us confronting him and the facts being made known. It was clearly impossible for us to watch him 24 hours a day. That was why we delayed telling him until the last moment and stayed with him until he surrendered himself to Scotland Yard. There is no doubt that an on-screen confrontation would have made a better television programme, but as responsible journalists we were not prepared to sacrifice Brian Gentleman in the interest of sensationalism.

In Campbell's article we were accused of 'understating Donaldson's dishonesty'. In fact, seven separate references were made to his criminal record in the programme. Campbell implied that Gentleman had been duped in some way into signing his confession, even though we had played him an *unedited* extract of a tape of Gentleman reading and checking the crucial parts of his statement.

But perhaps the most astonishing thing about Campbell's attack upon us is the way in which he seems prepared to join enthusiastically in M15's apparent cover-up of the whole affair.

In 1983 (and we have corroborated this entirely to our satisfaction) Derek Donaldson reported to M15 the activities of the Czech intelligence officer who had compromised Gentleman. He did not, however, identify his friend Brian Gentleman. Despite this, and information which Donaldson gave them of a planned meeting between himself, the Czech and Gentleman, M15 failed to detect what was going on. If Gentleman were to be prosecuted now, their ineptitude would be revealed at trial.

That Brian Gentleman did genuinely confess to having passed information to the Czechs is utterly beyond dispute. The real story remaining is how

and why M15 is once again engaged in a cover-up. It is surprising that Campbell, given his track record, failed so completely to address himself to it.

Peerless record

Baroness Turner of Camden, Assistant General Secretary, ASTMS

It has presumably escaped the notice of the supposedly well-informed Mr Roth (*NS* 11 July & 1 August) that there is a member of the House of Lords who happens to be a member of the TUC General Council, as well as still being actively involved in the trade union movement as a full-time official.

I took my seat as a Labour Peer on 18 June 1985. Since that time I have spoken sometimes from the Labour Front Bench on subjects including: pensions; the closure of Gartcosh Steel Mill; the economic situation; the Shops Bill (in Committee, where I moved a number of amendments); the Sex Discrimination Bill (where I again moved a number of amendments); the Wages Bill (where I again moved a number of amendments); equalisation of taxation between men and women.

I can only assume that Mr Roth has not been reading *Hansard*. Or is it assumed that trade union speakers are always male?

Errors, errors, everywhere

David Elstein, Director of Programmes, Thames Television

Your television columnist, Peter Hillmore, tells your readers that my main activity at Thames is to change the title of *This Week to TV Eye* (*NS* 1 August). As it happens, the change is in the other direction (no doubt Mr Hillmore would describe as mere cosmetics the new editor, new presenter, new reporters, new directors and new researchers). Nor is scheduling *Minder* a great concern of mine: Thames stopped making the series nearly two years ago. As for John Birt and my wanting to run Channel Four, the last step we took in that direction was writing a paper describing a possible structure for Channel Four — and that was 13 years ago.

Three references, three crass errors: could you not find a columnist whose knowledge of television rests on firmer foundations than a brief period of employment at LWT some years ago?





Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

Those were the days my friend, weren't they? Clement Attlee, above, wins Labour's largest ever election victory and still can't deliver socialism



Andrew Ward/Report

WHY PARTIES CANNOT RULE

We work within the myth that a party can truly 'win power' on behalf of a homogeneous following. As no party can, argues PAUL HIRST, Labour should plan for a new role and machinery to go with it

'DEMOCRACY' must now be the most commonplace term in British political rhetoric. Almost the entire left is eager to stress its commitment to democratic values and to stress the need for measures to promote further democratisation. This is hardly surprising since democracy is a word seldom absent from Mrs Thatcher's lips. She endlessly repeats that hers is a democratically elected government and that the policies she pursues derive their legitimacy from the ballot box. She repeatedly claims that, by contrast, the trade unions and the Labour Party cling to thoroughly undemocratic practices in their own organisations and that they harbour people who seek to destroy legitimate authority and democratic government in the interests of their own ideological schemes. No wonder then that freedom, fairness, liberty and democracy are seldom off the lips of Labour politicians too.

What is absent from the Labour Party's rhetoric is any sign that some serious reform is in fact intended within the precincts of the Palace of Westminster or in our electoral

system. The slightest hint of radical changes in our major political institutions would be a direct gift to the Conservatives. Proportional representation, for example, is perceived in the Labour Party as a gift to the Alliance which could deny Labour the chance of majority government in the future. Hence it may appear rational, in the run up to a general election, for the Labour Party to talk in general terms about the virtues of democracy and to say and intend almost nothing in the way of major reforms of Parliament, central government and the electoral system.

But that has been Party policy virtually since its formation. The most radical political reform measure Labour has ever attempted was the abolition of the Business and Universities Votes in 1947. If the political system and the machinery of government work well enough why should this be a matter for concern? Serious politicians, the argument goes, should concentrate on getting into office and on delivering attainable reforms desired by their supporters once in office.

Neil Kinnock evidently continues to think in this way. The top priority is to replace Mrs Thatcher in office and to attempt to undo as much of the damage her governments have done as possible. This is a sensible aim. In his Fabian Society lecture 'The Future of Socialism' he quotes R. H. Tawney to the effect that political democracy is the greatest asset possessed by socialists in a capitalistic society and that they would be fools to give the impression that they are less than wholehearted in their support for it. He assures us that parliamentary democracy 'is our preferred and deliberately chosen system of government. It is our basic tool for change and we are committed to using it and improving it.'* Clement Attlee might well have said the same, and remained as vague about the 'improvements'.

Parliamentary democracy is thus conceived of as an instrument of social change. But the question begged here is the type of change which is appropriate to the instrument. Let us imagine that in 1988 Labour has won a modest overall majority on about 40 per cent of the vote. It has a simple choice. It can use the parliamentary machinery as a party government to the extent that it attempts nothing too radical or too unpopular with the organised interests outside Parliament who may oppose it (and may even have voted Labour). Or it can try for something more radical and attempt to beat down the resistance of those opposed interests by means of state power. The problem with parliamentary reforms is that they mean making people and organisations outside Parliament do what they would prefer not to do.

As a tool for radical social change, parliamentary democracy is a flawed and brittle instrument. This is never truer than now. Given an electorate divided three ways and the strength of organised interests outside Parliament the prospect of an electoral consensus on, and extra-parliamentary organisations' acquiescence in, radical reforms, whether of right or left, is slight. At the same time the economic and social circumstances in Britain in 1978-88 will require radical measures to be taken. If Labour wins the election it has to hope to 'win' the ensuing government too, but it will be caught in the dilemma of being able to do only a limited amount without meeting serious resistance and yet needing to do a great deal if the expectations of its supporters and the demands of the situation are to be met.

This is not a new dilemma. But it is sharpened because the external constraints posed by Britain's economic decline have tightened on the Labour governments of each decade since Harold Wilson promised a period of radical reform and modernisation in 1964. The far-out-of-sight left's response to this dilemma is to gloat and to claim that it proves the inherent futility and reformist nature of parliamentary socialism. Neil Kinnock is right to challenge their sterile absurdity and to stress their value to the Conservatives as an anti-democratic bugbear. Their own solution — of extra-parliamentary revolutionary struggles — is a most improbable source of social change in a sophisticated western country.

The more traditional Labour Left's response has remained within the terms of parliamentary government and it has been twofold. First, it has continued to suppose that it is possible for a genuinely radical Labour Party to enjoy a level of support sufficiently near consensus to have the legitimacy to drive its policies through against a wealthy minority. The myth of 1945 as a popular endorsement of socialist policies and the belief that the bulk of the population is 'working class' and therefore represents a potential majority for socialism sustain this supposition.

Second, the Bennite left has in the past proposed political reforms that would expedite radical legislation and its administrative implementation. The abolition of the House of Lords, the reform of the judiciary and increased controls over civil servants would all strengthen the capacity of the majority party in the elected chamber. This relentless centralism and party-dominated state machine are usually softened by appeals for industrial and community democracy. The experience of Mrs Thatcher's government has reduced the appeal of such proposals to vanishing point.

The two parts of the traditional Labour

left's answer hang together. Like the mainstream of the Labour Party they envisage the primacy of electoral rather than extra-parliamentary struggle. A majority provides legitimacy for government action and strong central government is necessary in order to deal with organised big business. Centralised state power is necessary because social change is to be made through law rather than directly through organised mass action. The whole notion hinges on a large electoral majority for radical social change. Even the slightest acquaintance with the electoral history of Labour post-1945 cannot lead one to believe that such a majority left government is possible. Labour governments are possible and so are large parliamentary majorities, as in 1966, but not a popular consensus for radical social change. Why not? Ignore the sociological pokings to determine how many of the population are 'working class' and simply note that what is now a very middle of the road Labour Party will be more than lucky to get the same percentage of votes cast as Mrs Thatcher got in 1983 (42.7).

CURIOSLY, the whole discussion of parliamentary democracy as an instrument of social change puts great weight on a most unusual and improbable event in electoral politics, an absolutely crushing majority of genuine popular support for one party and its policies. Why is this event so improbable? To answer involves asking another question, why is Britain a democratic country? The answer does not consist primarily in a system of representative elections or in the legality of a number of political parties entering into the electoral contest. It certainly is not to be found in our obsolete, arbitrary and unfair voting system. Rather it results from the fact that there is effective and active political competition between a large number of independent organised interests to influence decisions. This is a process effective between elections and which sets the issues which underly them. The parties draw support from and are forced to make concessions to the organised interests. Some interests have considerable success in influencing decisions and in setting the agenda of issues, others less so.

In such a system of political competition those with wealth, education, spare time and organisational skills have a far greater chance of prevailing than those with little of these resources. A democratic society is perfectly compatible with the existence of social inequality and social classes. Indeed, it will tend to reinforce them by compounding wealth with political influence. To the extent that a significant proportion of political actors accept and sustain such a system, however reluctantly, the political results of democracy confer a

* *The Future of Socialism*, Fabian Pamphlet 509, 1986, p.6.

certain legitimacy on the inequalities of resources which have helped to produce them.

In the hackneyed phrase, Britain is a 'pluralistic society'. It is not an equal society nor is it a society where all have equal influence. But it is certainly one with a rich diversity of organised interests and of the social groups on which these associations and organisations are founded. These vary from major interest organisations like trade unions or the CBI to local interest groups (like the campaign against Stanstead airport) and special interest minorities (like the anti-fluoridation campaigners). In such a politically and organisationally complex society political parties are very restricted in their electoral appeal if they rest on one narrow social constituency or exclusive ideology. It follows from this that the major political parties are complex coalitions formed from some of these organised minorities which have an affinity. Not surprisingly the unions, black activists and anti-poverty campaigners tend to support the Labour Party, while many major companies, anti-immigration groups and supporters of private health and education tend to support the Conservative Party. It is only by such aggregation of what would otherwise be minorities that the parties can hope to win significant electoral support. Even then the electorally successful party rules as a *de facto* minority, having a majority of seats but seldom of votes, and certainly never of opinions or of political/organisational resources.

For such a political system to survive enough people must feel secure enough with the rule of one coalition of minorities at a time and secure enough that each of the parties which enter the contest with a chance of winning will respect the basic rules of the minorities rule game. Such a system of rule by minorities works moderately well if its basic social and economic framework can be taken for granted. Each party-coalition and each organised interest has definite and more or less attainable objectives within that framework.

Mrs Thatcher's vision of an 'enterprise society' looks set to flounder in the face of the opposition of organised interests both outside and within her party-coalition. It is a vision which, despite its formal commitment to political democracy and economic competition, is in no way pluralist — it envisages but one form of economic organisation and one scale of social values. The Prime Minister has found enemies multiplying even as she is beating others down. Having defeated Mr Scargill and the miners she finds herself ranged against such unlikely foes as the House of Lords, the Church of England and the responsible squirearchy. Her mistake was to imagine she headed an ideologically directed and

coherent party machine rather than a ramshackle coalition of minority interests grouped under the same name.

Neil Kinnock is far too shrewd and too genuine in his pluralism to make the same mistake. But if he is to govern he must deal with social and economic problems that require co-ordinated actions by substantial numbers of organised interests and their co-operation in mutual (if not equal) sacrifice. Britain's economic decline and the social strains it produces do not lead to the radical simplification of the issues and organisations contending it in the political arena. Certainly not to the classic opposition the socialist movement has claimed to be primary, capital vs labour. The Labour movement currently has enough problems of labour vs labour, with the split among miners and the conflict between electricians and printers, to expose such simplification for the fantasy that it is.

It is hardly likely then that we can confidently consider a parliamentary majority 'our basic tool for change', and yet radical changes *are* needed. What is the solution to this dilemma?

THE ANSWER is to seek measures of co-operation, co-ordination and bargaining among interests such that the degree of resistance to any mutually agreed policy is less. Such a programme of attempting to organise change faces the fact that we have a complex and pluralistic political system. It does not try to pretend that our democracy is based on an enormous majority of unorganised individuals loyally obeying the government they have voted into power and resisted only by small and unrepresentative minorities clinging to unjustified privileges.

To institute such processes of bargaining, co-operation and co-ordination implies creating the forums necessary to support them, and a measure of compulsion in order to get the interests to take them seriously. It also implies a very radical change of attitude on the part of governing parties. Far from seeking to 'rule' — that is, pursuing policies of party government and claiming democratic legitimacy in doing so — they must act as the means of orchestrating consensus between major organised interests on certain key issues. That means taking policy from a process of corporate bargaining and not from the party manifesto (which usually ends up being ignored anyway). It means seeking what groups can deliver and using the powers of pressure and persuasion which central government has to get them to come up with the goods. As the orchestrator and enforcer of such a process government has a difficult, but not impossible role. It must prevent freeloading and encourage realistic and informed bargaining.

In Britain such processes of explicit corporate bargaining have been far from

successful. From the left they have been regarded as nothing more than class collaboration and from the right as a threat to the dual sovereignty of parliament and the market. Income policies have been short term expedients which have then collapsed. Planning based on mutual agreement between the firms, the unions and the government has barely been tried.

Almost without exception, the unions have been too conservative and defensive really to accept the need for far reaching changes in the institutions of wage determination and economic management. But the Labour Party is less sympathetic to dog-in-the-manger unionism now than it ever has been and enough of the unions are scared enough after several years of relentless Conservative offensive to begin to co-operate in making the internal changes needed for such bargaining to work. It needs a strong political lead to get the unions committed in a serious way; if that happens it will put an almost intolerable pressure on at least the manufacturing side of business.

But the evidence seems to show that the Labour Party does not see the limits to traditional party government and is failing to think of institutional alternatives. Perhaps no one wishes to gaze on the ruins of the Wilson and the Callaghan era. The measures proposed then have worked well in other countries and the reason they failed here is the lack of will to persist with them until they work. There are no clever alternatives in economic and social policy to this dogged process of bargaining by the major interests. The state of Britain's economy in the 1990s will provide a powerful compulsion against inaction and seeking to protect special interests.

An electoral majority does not give the governing party the capacity to prevail in a political system with powerful and competing organised interests. Neil Kinnock sees the need for the socialist defense of *social* pluralism, for freedom of choice, but he does not seem to see the consequences of that for *political* pluralism. If he believes that the alternatives to Labour in 'British politics are variants on disaster' then he should take seriously the task of equipping the party for social leadership, of bringing in the widest possible range of interests to bargaining in order to get them to agree to something this side of disaster. Labour may lead in such a process but it cannot dictate the terms of the bargains struck. To lead in this way involves accepting a very different political style and a wholly different conception of what democracy is. Labour can govern successfully again but only if it finally gives up the illusion of rule. □

Paul Hirst is professor of politics and sociology at Birkbeck College, University of London.

THEATRE

Everything in the garden

Kenneth Rea

Solider ants like traffic wardens; marmosets in the foliage: Kew Gardens last weekend was flooded by Lumiere & Son

ONE OF THE BASIC aims of performance work is to jolt audiences into using not just their intellect, as they might (especially in Britain) for a conventional play, but every one of their senses. Increasingly, this is becoming the common point between performance artists and experimental theatre groups, though of course they arrive at it by quite different means.

Lumiere & Son's magnificent spectacle *Deadwood*, presented for three nights in Kew Gardens, had all the characteristics of a large-scale performance piece yet, for the company, it was merely the latest in a long line of experiments to lead us towards a new recognition of what theatre can be. The boundaries are being crossed from both sides.

Scene one set the mood. It took place at dusk with 1,500 people sprawled out on a lawn under the trees listening to three Bolivian musicians. This is the kind of thing that Londoners take to very well: the opportunity presents itself so rarely. There was an air of laid-back anticipation as we lapped up our wine and let the music soak through us. At first glance it looked as though the musicians, lit by yellow spotlights, were catching the last shafts of a setting sun. This was the first of many illusions that were to follow.

As darkness gathered, Trevor Stuart (a Lumiere & Son stalwart), dressed like a Victorian explorer in cream flannels, leapt onto the stage and launched into elliptical praise of the rain forests. 'This is the centre of the earth, where they have everything — absolutely one piece of everything.'

At his command we all set off for a trek through the gardens, with the trees on both sides of us spectacularly illuminated (by Simon Corder) and Kew now taking on the ambience of some lush and steamy tropical rain forest. Mists drifted through the vegetation and, in the branches, clung people dressed as parrots, chimpanzees, sloths and whatever other creatures might be expected to inhabit these parts. Through strategically placed speakers came the amplified sounds of forest life; also the babble of human voices. It was like taking part in a very elaborate party game.

Hilary Westlake's masterly stroke as deviser and director was to avoid realistic animal impersonations by anthropomorphising the 70-odd creatures, giving them a style and theatrical reality of their own. A band of



soldier ants in uniform, performing silent choral dances, looked like a platoon of traffic wardens. Grasshoppers wore green jodhpurs. A family in fur jackets and painted faces frolicked in the foliage as marmosets, but the innocent delight of one of them — a tiny girl who stopped playing for a moment to watch the people staring — turned the tables and made us all accomplices in the spectacle.

The climax came when we reached the Temperate House, now lit against the night sky in luminous mauve and yellow with white clad explorers lounging on the steps as if this huge glass house was their forest mansion. One of them spoke about the voluptuousness of life in the rain forests. A choir was singing something about dead wood while, high above them on a catwalk inside the glass house, musicians tore into Jeremy Peyton Jones' vigorous score. Eight dancers representing butterflies or birds of paradise — it didn't matter which — came up the steps and tangoed with the explorers. The sheer boldness of the concept made the scene a theatrical triumph. It also fulfilled the main aesthetic of performance work: the arrangement of music, text, choreography, visual elements and performance in a juxtaposition that transcends literal sense and takes on a new, subjective meaning.

It was on the way back that I started to feel that David Gale's lush prose was becoming intrusive. The anthropomorphic animals, the glowing trees and the haunting forest sounds seemed to say it all; the constant braying of amplified voices only brought in an unwanted intellectualism that broke the spell. Besides, there was no time to work out sentences like 'This is the green machine. This is where the light sparks run free'.

After the promenade came the statement of the theme. A commercial exploiter, perched in

the scaffolding that framed a Roman temple folly undergoing restoration, declaimed to us about the need to cut down these forests and get the timber — good hardwood — out, even if it meant destroying most of the wild life. As he raved on, all the creatures of the rain forest assembled and began moving together in a simple and fragile dance. We might well have danced with them.

The success of *Deadwood* proves that we have the artistic resources to match foreign companies like Els Comediantes or La Fura dels Baus (the latter performing in London this month) that attract more money and acclaim for doing much the same thing. The Brentford Watermans Arts Centre (with Earthlife) is to be congratulated for having the imagination to commission such an adventurous project.

Next week Victoria Radin steps into Benedict Nightingale's shoes as our regular theatre contributor

EXHIBITION

Cashing in

Brian Rotman

A celebration of money at the British Museum almost drowns the knell of the City's Big Bang

THE LANGUAGE of the deal, buying and selling, being cheap and dear, dominates our social existence and generates our metaphors and images. No wonder that we find money

itself so fascinating.

Money, of course, is only a sign, a signifier of value. But value is a slippery, abstract concept; so elusive and vertiginous, in fact, that we turn with relief to its material expression — coins, tokens, stamped documents, scrip, coupons, cheques, banknotes, credit cards — which we then invest with magical presence as palpable icons of a hidden and intangible power. The organisers of the British Museum's 'Money: From Cowrie Shells to Credit Cards' obligingly fixate on these signifiers and provide a rich array of them. We are led past heaps of cowrie shells, glittering lumps of pale yellow electrum, discs, triangles, strips and ingots of gold and silver, iron money, salt money, copper money, money fashioned from feathers and rope, Western banknotes and tokens made of everything from metal tags to plastic cards. En route we learn many things about the material nature of these icons: how they are sealed, minted, covered with uncopyable curlicues, stored, debased, counterfeited and so on.

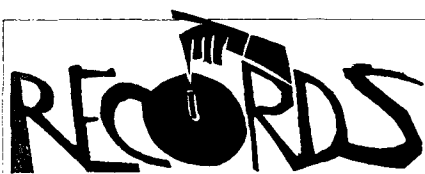
The exhibition is well done and highly professional — a smooth, informative 4,000-year pedagogic jog from cowrie shells to credit cards — and family clean (no mention of

the money/faeces nexus, though the marvellous Gillray frontispiece cartoon with gold falling from between Midas' legs gives a hint, and hardly a scarab in sight). The catalogue reproductions are expertly presented and there's a kiddies' guide-to-money available with crosswords and join-the-dot pictures. The final exhibit is a money dispensing machine inviting us to insert plastic in exchange for paper cash. The machine is presented in a user-friendly, demystified way: its casing has been replaced by perspex to reveal its normally hidden micro-circuit innards, it is brightly lit and carries the protective logo of the Nationwide Building Society which, of course, is the sponsor of the exhibition. The punter walks out of the exhibition friendly towards the Nationwide, mystified about money's relation to power and full of interesting facts. But money is of perennial interest, so it's legitimate to ask: why now? Why an exhibition about money in London, 1986?

Well, 1986, the organisers tell us, is the 150th anniversary of the Royal Numismatic Society, as well as the year the International Numismatic Congress meets in London. But these dates seem as much retrospective luck as

judgment and, in any case, have little to do with the interests of the Nationwide. What, then? Immediately before the friendly cash machine, and after the great glut of signifiers, we pass through a small, dimly lit area to encounter money in its final electronic state: the signifier has gone abstract; two computer monitor screens glow and flash real-time changes in the London gold and foreign exchange markets. Here, surely, lies the reason for Nationwide's sponsorship. London in Autumn 1986 (in fact, on 27 October, the day after the exhibition closes) is to be the scene of the Big Bang, the Stock Exchange's quaint label for the complete de-regulation of the London financial and capital markets and, in the upheaval and financial bloodletting after the Bang, the Nationwide will be a player, fighting insurance companies, banks, and other building societies for a local slice of worldwide money.

Seen like this, the exhibition reveals itself as a nostalgic goodbye to money. Of course, money always evokes nostalgia for its day: a ten shilling note from 1971 seems like a message from a lost and alien era. But here the nostalgia is total. Money — familiar and dear to us through its stamped and inscribed signifiers — is being put on history's rubbish heap. Usurped by global electronic blips, it has entered the museum. □



Living In The Heart Of The Beast

THE KALAHARI SURFERS *Recommended*

This initially appears to be a newsy curio: a comment upon the South African revolution from whites within South Africa itself. The circumstances of its illegal recording are interesting, but it works because it is a formal success: cut-up Botha speeches and Afrikaans-speak are set against hi-life and reggae rhythms, while viciously critical (and historically intelligent) lyrics are sung dispassionately over settings that often recall early Zappa. The pervasive effect is disturbing and alienating, as it's meant to be; it's possible to underestimate the powerful symbolism of a record that mixes the rhetoric of white supremacy with black rhythms and thereby undercuts it.

The British Psychedelic Trip 1966-1969

VARIOUS *See For Miles*

The sound of corporate pop — epitomised by puling phonies like the Eurhythmics — is so pervasive in its boiled-out mix of obsolete Black funk that it's sent me scurrying back into the past for livelier forms. This record collects 20 singles from a lost era of pop: the point at which the tight discipline and style of Mod crossed over into the extravagance — and self-indulgence — of Hippie. Psychedelia was an import twice removed: a style copied from Americans who were copying English versions of their heritage. In it, everything blurred: guitars sounded like sitars, lyrics became metaphysical. The result is an expansive, not restrictive, pop artificiality: too expansive, as the experiment was cut off by the demise of pirate radio and

the polarising of the pop audience in 1968. Because it hasn't been plundered to death, this stuff still sounds fresh.

Flaunt It

SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK *Parlophone*

This deliberately disposable product is not without its charm. The most likeable thing about Sigue Sigue Sputnik has always been their records; their polemic — that pop is now overburdened with its own self-importance and 'adulthood' — has some point. Away from the incessant hype and silly pictures, *Flaunt It* displays a sure grasp of trash-pop aesthetics, with material collaged from Eddie Cochran, New York electronic minimalists Suicide, computer games and cheap gore films. Its problem is that it is about nothing more than an idea — of instant, childish disposability — which is carried through with such consistency that it has all the sustenance of an ice-lolly.

Panic

THE SMITHS *Rough Trade*

One key to the Smiths' success — apart from the actual quality of their material — is that they have a sure grasp of their audience and that it is an audience proportionately ill-catered for by the music industry. They zero in on the fact that for most people, adolescence — or, in its economic name, Teenage — is difficult and often miserable, far from the group image of relentless cheerfulness and sociability so assiduously fostered by the leisure industries. Their new single, 'Panic', with its demented rockabilly rhythm (rather like 65 Rolling Stones) and polemical lyrics — 'Hang the blessed DJ/Because the music that they constantly play/Says nothing to me about my life' — acts as another assertion of the right to be different. In doing so, it has struck a chord.

Jon Savage

CINEMA

Chinese lantern

Adam Mars-Jones

Yellow Earth (PG)
ICA

BEHIND *YELLOW EARTH'S* almost defiantly traditional title, suggestive of every stylised Chinese melodrama designed to gladden the heart of the collective, a lean and economical film is struggling to be born. The period is 1939 (so no Red Guards), the setting the remote province of Shaanxi (so no bicycles). A soldier arrives on a mission to collect the local folk songs, suitable examples of which will be given new words and used as marching songs by the Communist Army. Instead, of course, he becomes involved in the lives of the poor family with whom he takes lodgings.

It's mildly ironic that a film set at the time of the Sino-Japanese War should reject so strongly the dominant strains of recent Chinese films, the foursquare, the didactic, the sentimental, and align itself with a Japanese ideal of cinema. But the director, Chen Kaige, has taken advantage of the recent restructuring of the Chinese film industry by which small studios were founded in the provinces. He has managed to sidestep the 20-year apprenticeships usual in China and is clearly determined to make his mark. *Yellow Earth* is hell-bent on austerity and indirection.

The resulting style has many virtues. The



Soldier Gu (Wang Xueqi)

Yellow River, purling smoothly or sullenly bubbling, becomes a featured player. The unproductive earth just lies there in a weak sun. Every bucket of water that the motherless daughter of the house, Cuiqiao, fetches from the river has a large component of mud.

The colours of the film have been rigorously planned. The most vivid shade is the bright red used for weddings. The hero, Gu, sees a wedding procession as he approaches the village but is shocked to realise that the bride is not yet 13, though the groom is well on in years. The bride is kept wrapped up in red cloth during the ceremony and red comes to be the colour of the marital doom for Cuiqiao, who is the same age.

The film's use of green is equally calculated. It appears only in one scene, when the villagers wear garlands of dried leaves on their heads for a ceremony. The colour's intimations of fertility are undone by the fact that the crops have failed and the ceremony is a rain-dance.

Even at the wedding feast the area's poverty is manifest: under the sauce, the fish is made of wood. Gu, whose real status is presumably humble, is treated as a potentate. The locals call him 'The Official' or 'Our Official' and defer to him constantly. When he takes out a notebook to transcribe a song, sung at the feast by a sort of Chinese counter-tenor, everybody at his table freezes.

The family on whom he is billeted is similarly cowed. Gu has been told that a local girl is an inspired singer and suspects that it is Cuiqiao (the audience, privy to the soundtrack, knows that it is). But it is a long time before he gets a peep out of any of them and then it is Cuiqiao's young brother Hanhan who breaks the silence, with a ditty about wetting the bed. Gu teaches him instead a song about hammers and sickles and scythes.

It is the misfortune of these folksongs, whether in the original or politicised versions, to sound like entries to some *New Statesman* competition for ethnic silliness: 'The piebald cock flies over the wall/The Communist Party shall save us all', for instance, or 'Green grass and cowdung won't put out a fire/Folk-songs can't save me', which Cuiqiao sings in her heartsickness for Gu.

Gu has filled her head with progressive notions of what is possible for women — Southern women. The conflict of the two sets of values is, inevitably, the engine of the plot. It is ominous that Cuiqiao's father compares a

beaten wife to kneaded dough but it is economics that forces him to marry her off. He will also have the satisfaction of knowing that his dead wife will 'close her eyes' at last.

If anything, the conflict is artificially tilted against the well-meaning Gu. Cuiqiao makes a coded appeal for help to avoid her impending marriage, but he fails to twig. The scene is shot to show Cuiqiao's face and nothing of Gu, who is inside the house calculating how much he owes for his keep, but that isn't enough to disguise an abrupt insensitivity on his part. If there's cash left over, he says, you should buy some pretty cloth. I have some already, she replies, referring to her wedding-dress, but he's too slow to realise what she means.

A glimmer of intuition on his part, or some plain speaking on hers, would avert what is, from this point on, undoubtedly melodrama, however indirectly shot. We see nothing of Cuiqiao's husband on her wedding night except his hand but, from the expression on her face, he is a vampire at best. Bresson, for one, might not show faces at all in this scene. Cuiqiao runs away, cutting off her pigtail as a farewell present to her father, and sets off to join the army. She drowns in the Yellow River in the middle of singing her final competition entry.

Yellow River retreats from its own promise and falls short of forging a unified language. It richly deserves an audience; yet only an audience surfeited with the products on which the film is turning its back is likely to be properly moved by its achievement, its intimacy and its attempts at balance. □

TELEVISION

Gut reaction

Peter Hillmore

TELEVISION MAY BE ignoring the body politic in the summer but, my God, it's concentrating on the body human. There've been so many medical programmes recently that blurb about the inside story has come to mean the story of our insides.

There are two explanations put forward whenever a medical programme is made about a new disease or a new cure (when I was in hospital a few years ago with a 'new' brain illness, I consoled myself with the fact that at least I would become a footnote in medical text books, only to discover that the illness is always named after the doctor who diagnoses it, not the patient who actually had it). There is the explanation that the illness affects x per cent of the population and will strike even more people unless an American university comes up with a cure. (America is important, because it will justify the film makers going there. This is the *Horizon* approach.)

The other explanation is the exact opposite: only one person has the ailment, but could it catch on? This is the approach favoured by the commercial television companies and it was best illustrated last week by Miriam Stoppard's programme on male pregnancy in the *Where There's Life* series (C4). Given

Stoppard's relentless cheerfulness I'm surprised it wasn't called 'Womb with a View'. One woman has become pregnant and given birth after her womb was removed. Ergo, a womb is not essential for pregnancy. Men do not have wombs, therefore it is possible a man could get pregnant. This was the doubtful premise on which the programme was based, doubtful because the medical experts weren't convincing.

But Dr Stoppard was not only concerned with the medical aspects. She also wanted to know Would This Be A Good Thing? There then followed a dreadfully unstructured studio discussion with people in the streets and doctors behind the desk. You will be glad to know that some people thought it a good thing and other people thought it was not a good thing. That was the trouble with the programme; it was so excited at the potential discovery it had made and so determined both



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to predict the 'cataclysmic changes' to family life and to let everyone in the audience have their say that it ended up like a *Guardian* editorial, full of on the one hand, on the other, devoid of conclusions.

Still, we should be thankful for one rather large mercy: we didn't get Miriam Stoppard addressing us from inside a womb. The BBC had an inside story on **Body Matters** and the presenters sat inside a giant mouth — yes, really — because the programme was all about teeth. (I hope no one at the BBC is making a programme about piles.) Gimmicks were substituted for facts, the audience had their teeth painted with a purple substance which showed how much plaque they had and a blonde actor simpered delightfully, showing us her teeth as she did so. And we learnt, surprise, surprise, that regular brushing of your teeth can prevent tooth decay.

There were probably some BBC executives gnashing their teeth in a most unhealthy manner up in Edinburgh as they tried to pretend that the Commonwealth Games were a riot of fun and excitement, despite the absence of so many exciting stars. The BBC commentators are really no more than fans with microphones and the only useful purpose they serve is to identify the athletes as they run round the track. Even the experts, like Brendan Foster, start to emulate fans and to offer us platitudes instead of analysis. When I can see that a runner is about 20 yards behind everyone else, I really don't need Mr Foster to tell me that 'he has a lot to do if he's going to catch up with the leader'.

Sometimes the coverage was very grudging: you could hear the resentment in David Iyk's voice as he was forced to report every day from the shooting championships around Edinburgh when you could sense that he felt he had a right to the glamour events like the 1,500 metres. He was so resentful that he would tell us the result before the shooting started: 'Brian comes to the line, knowing he must score 99 points to win. And he didn't.' After having been told the result, we then saw a hopeful Brian blasting away.

But something did happen last week that I really feel is worth reporting, it's so rare. I actually found myself laughing out loud at a television comedy series. I'd turned on Channel Four's **Golden Girls** out of duty rather than desire. The synopsis didn't look promising: a series about three American middle-aged widows and an elderly mother could only be twee and mawkish. It wasn't. The jokes were bitter; the mother talked about death with longing and no one put their arms around her consolingly. It was acid, cynical, funny and I recommend it. I could have done with a bit of humour in the new and much hyped BBC serial **Fighting Back**. Hazel O'Connor plays a harassed mother who leaves her husband after she finds him playing Russian Roulette with their 11-year-old son. She goes in search of her parents in Bristol to find the house blown up. She loses her children, finds them again, has no money, gets arrested, loses her children again. And those are the cheerful bits. It's curiously watchable and well acted (even though a bit pointless) but it's marred by some of the most intrusive music imaginable. □



Omnibusk

Naseem Khan

'THIS,' SAID Maggie Pinhorn firmly, gesturing at a few hundred magicians, musicians, mimes and other talents strewn, one recent weekend, around Covent Garden, 'is our AGM.' Not an analogy that can be pushed too far, but a serviceable enough description of the Fourth Annual Festival of Street Entertainers.

Two days of carefully scheduled anarchy, it makes its way through a series of complex heats toward the announcement of Street Entertainer of the Year: a position, the publicity implies, that will set its holder's foot on the staircase to fame — as it did to last year's winners, Nickelodeon, 'flying in from Canada, after a hectic year, to hand over their title'. This year, over 500 performers were to be found showing their skills at 25 different pitches around Covent Garden Market. Who was to grab Nickelodeon's crown?

Enter Work in Progress. Come and be a judge, had written Maggie Pinhorn of Alternative Arts, the organisation that regularly fills Covent Garden with entertainment. So, secretly chuffed, I turned up, got my badge and clipboard and was directed to Pitch 3, 'Specialities', where I was supposed to assess one shift. 'What's a Speciality?' I asked timidly as I set out. 'Who knows?' said Pinhorn, with a peal of what I later knew to be ominous laughter, and vanished. I was alone with my clipboard.

Pitch 3 was a tricky site. It was just a section of pavement halfway between the beginning of King Street (closed to traffic for the event) and Covent Garden proper. So, although a fair amount of passing trade came along it, most of it had its sights set firmly ahead to where it thought the action was. This proved a problem for the Specialities. Rule One of street entertainment — seize your audience.

It was not a rule that my lot observed too well. Quite frankly, they could have driven a starving man from a hot-dog stand. First on were Mickey Zipp and the Flys: a glum, rather grubby couple in black who played amplified music and sang incomprehensible lyrics. Nobody (and you could hardly blame them) gave them a second glance. Up the road ahead the sound of laughter and applause came from a dense crowd surrounding another performer. Mickey Zipp played doggedly on, staring glassily over the passing heads as if they were not there. At last I broke and sneaked off down to Pitch 1 where they were having a very good time with Platform Five: four girls in waitress black-and-white belting out a fine series of acapella numbers with a great sense of crisp style. Unlike Mickey Zipp, they

seemed to enjoy the challenge of pulling a crowd, playing it and keeping it. And that brings me to Rule Two: enjoy it. Some of the performers gave every impression of being there because something better hadn't turned up. The ones with class used the street situation and created a feeling of rough, instant, spontaneous delight.

Not so, alas, back at Pitch 3, where 'the world's most original one-man Dickensian show' was about to get going. At least the unknown actor in Dickensian dress did move out from the pavement to approach his audience (Mickey Zipp had been anchored to amplifiers) but his multi-character scenes from the works needed more attention than a light-minded street audience is prepared to give. Rule Three: tailor your material to your state.

Up the road Pitch 1, dammit, was at it again. There were the Swinging Plonkers: a wonderful six-strong music group in crazy clothes playing washboard, drum, sax, ukelele, guitar and a makeshift double bass made from a stick and a tea chest. Witty performers with an infectious sense of enjoyment, they reduced to a sad contrast my own pitch, where an elderly zither player was now lugubriously tapping out thin tunes. It was hard not to feel relief when the next act, Morris Minor, failed to show up. The spot was promptly pinched by a red-faced Highlander in full gear, plus bagpipes, and I crept away to brighter things. And very nice things (including an orange-haired juggler called Cotton who eventually landed the title) there were.

Next day I graduated to the 'Magic' finals, whose three contenders — Duncan Trillo, Roy Lee and Rosy Gibbs — certainly knew their stuff. Cards poured from their open palms, metal rings parted, flowers bloomed, scarves turned into brollies. Trillo and Lee did it straight — dinner jackets and wordless mime — but Gibbs was different, which is why she won. She looked great: white suit, black topper on bleached hair, turquoise shirt. She talked and she used the space: moving round the crowd, chatting, showing objects, making people feel involved. Rule Four: create a rapport with your audience. Like many of the performers, she found her co-opted volunteer was a foreign tourist; unlike others she could handle it. Rule Five: be prepared for anything. Her major trick, involving oranges, ash and funny specs, was a marvel. Rule Six: be original.

Back at Specialities, an overweight old man with silver hair and thick specs and an incongruous straw hat marked 'Venezia' is laboriously setting up a score or so of tatty wooden figures and soft toys. As he pumps a treadle, which also operates cymbals, these jig up and down in time to the music. It's monotonous, unchanging, oddly depressing and, as he pumps on, it's hard not to feel the chasm between him and his like and the bright young Channel 4-bound entertainers. Nonsense, said Pinhorn, roundly. They are great characters, the old blokes, and they love the life. The doubt remains. □

Next week: *Upheavals in disability arts.*



As time goes by and by

Colin Gordon

Cinema 1: The Movement-Image
GILLES DELEUZE trans. HUGH TOMLINSON
and BARBARA HABBERJAM Athlone £29.50

OF ALL THE famous French intellectuals of the last generation, Gilles Deleuze is probably the most underappreciated in this country and the most engaging. His international celebrity derives almost entirely from one book, *The Anti-Oedipus* (1972), an eccentric and gargantuan essay-pamphlet on ethics, politics and psychiatry which became a *gauchiste* bestseller in France and earned Deleuze and his co-author Félix Guattari a durable status as bogey figures of the older Marxist-Freudian new Left.

In France, where Deleuze is widely seen as, with Michel Foucault, the outstanding philosopher of his generation, his reputation has had a rather broader footing in an output of some 20 books including a series of studies of past thinkers which are deservedly used as textbooks. Among these are two immensely lively introductions to Nietzsche and Kant which have recently appeared here in translation.

Read as a whole, Deleuze's work makes an impression of admirable consistency. Characteristically, in his preface to *Cinema I*, Deleuze makes a plausible connection from a tribute to Hitchcock, seen as the artist of the 'mental image' who brings the first, classic era of film to its culmination, and an interpretation of British empiricist philosophy as a science of relations and contingency which he first developed in a book on David Hume published in 1954. Nothing is so typical of Deleuze as his genius for affectionate and unexpected description, the shock of infectious enthusiasm he communicates for so many of the philosophers, scientists, writers, painters and film makers he has written about. The slightly rancorous knowingness which we

have learned to adopt in recent years towards French intellectual culture could hardly be a more misleading guide to what Deleuze is about. He's not a dealer in theatrical, nihilistic, subversions of Western Reason, or narcissistic, metacritical postures, always more radical than yesterday's, and his ideas are not well suited for mechanical reproduction by zealous sectaries. He is a thinker whose inventiveness springs from a vision of philosophy as a way of living and engaging life.

Cinema I raises two obvious questions. Modern philosophy has long been preoccupied with technology, the experience of time and the status of images. So, in the first place, ought we not to be more surprised than we are that cinema is an art about which modern philosophy has had so little to say? And what have we been missing? After all, even if we lack cinematic philosophies, we have not exactly been starved of film theory. The reader might be forgiven a sceptical feeling that the one might only be a new name for the other, on finding that Deleuze presents his study as an essay in the classification of filmic signs and images. In 1986 do we need another book on signs in the cinema?

The answers are to be found in the surely unprecedented coupling of thinkers whom Deleuze looks to here as inspirers: C. S. Peirce, the founder of semiotics, and Henri Bergson. Bergson's role here is a reminder of a simple and startling absence in so much of film theory: the consideration of movies as *movement*. Is it possible that commentary on the still image has lead film theory away from the essence of film? Peirce's importance to Deleuze is as the proponent of a science of signs which is *not* an extended version of linguistics and not to be allied to an enterprise of interpretation. Signs are simply realities of the world; Deleuze quotes with sympathy Pasolini's idea, patronisingly misunderstood by the semiologists, that the sign-material of films is the 'language of reality itself'.

Deleuze puts these ideas together and comes up with the following theses. Recognising the primacy of movement in the movies leads, following Bergson, to a notion of experience which breaks with subjective-objective dualism. For Bergson, 'it was no longer possible to oppose movement as physical reality in the external world to the image as a physical reality in consciousness'; the true elements of reality are 'movement-images' which reflective reason abstractly cuts up into separate moments and objects. There is an immense irony here, as Deleuze shows. Bergson, whose thought amounted to a ready-made metaphysics of cinema, in fact denounced the cinema, within a few years of its appearance, as based on the rational mistake of perception which decomposes continuous movement into a sequence of still instants...

Bergson affirms that matter and consciousness are one. Deleuze correspondingly holds that the movement-images of film are, in themselves, a medium of thought. The film-makers think in film signs and images, just as the philosophers think in concepts. Philosophy's business here is therefore not to interpret the image, to recover it into articulate thought, to unearth the buried meanings behind the sign (or in front of it in the mind of the viewer). The challenge is to understand film as a *world*, just as Peirce meant his semiotics to be part of a logic which would be a 'science of the world'. So it is that this book's pursuit of what might look like a dry, scholastic hierarchy of categories actually produces a comparative geography-anthropology-cosmology of the possible worlds of film: the different styles of the great film-makers realise the different basic aspects of the movement-image: in Deleuze's terms, perception-images, action-images, affect-images.

Deleuze shows, too, how from Griffith and Eisenstein, through the New Wave and beyond, these image-styles realise visions of

society and history in the form of constellations of space-time. The classic cinema, for Deleuze, works through the movement-image which produces an indirect image of time itself. With the Forties there breaks in a crisis of the movement-image which correlates with a social crisis of perception, an eruption of the 'wrong movement', a loosening of the sensory-motor stability of the old regime of perception. *Cinema I* leaves the reader in suspenseful anticipation of *Cinema II*, which follows through the sequel of this crisis: the advent, with Wells and Resnais, of the 'time-image', the first cinema in which time is offered directly to the senses.

But one can already see here how, renewing the grand theme of the ways cinema invents, transmutes and communes with the whole historical experience of Modern Times, *Cinema I* offers us a prodigious 'movement-image' of the 20th century itself. One can see why Deleuze does not want to call his book a philosophy of the cinema. Bergson's goal was not so much a philosophy of science as a philosophy adequate to the new world which the science of his time had made and revealed. Deleuze is trying to do the same today with the new worlds of cinema. We might all have something philosophical to gain from the venture: a richer ability to think the time-experiences of our time. □

FICTION

Hard facts

Harriett Gilbert

La Douleur

MARGUERITE DURAS trans. BARBARA BRAY
Collins £8.95

Cronus' Children

YVES NAVARRE trans. HOWARD GIRVEN
Calder £11.95

'THIS IS INVENTED' warns Marguerite Duras of the fifth and final text of **La Douleur**. A Jewish child of seven years old, her parents taken away by the Gestapo, watches, with the woman who is hiding her, as Allied bombers pass over their flat towards Mannheim, Frankfurt, Berlin. The woman, a Gentile, sits in the hall with a revolver — 'What the little girl does know is that as soon as the lady hears the word *polizei* outside the door she'll open it and kill everyone, first the others and then the two of them' — while the child sings softly to herself.

'This one is invented. Literature', explains Duras of the previous text: the account of a mundane, dangerous meeting — as Paris lifts its head from the Second World War — between a suspicious old factory worker and a 'stranger' whose role in that war we must guess.

And, if 'literature' sounds dismissive, then up to a point it's meant to. The autobiographical title piece — in which the narrator awaits her husband's return (or

failure to return) from Dachau — is described in contrast as 'one of the most important things in my life. It can't really be called "writing". I found myself looking at pages regularly filled with small, calm, extraordinarily even handwriting. I found myself confronted with a tremendous chaos of thought and feeling that I couldn't bring myself to tamper with, and beside which literature was something of which I felt ashamed.'

You might think it self-evident that a piece describing the author's real emotions, as news of the concentration camps but not of her own husband's fate seeped back, would matter to her more than one depicting the plight of an imagined Jewish child. But I don't think that this is entirely (if at all) Duras' point. It's the way in which the story was written, the way in which its truthfulness emerged that affects her. Factuality (this may sound ruthless, but Duras is one of the most ruthless writers — with herself, her readers, her 'characters') is mainly another chisel for exposing truth.

All five texts of *La Douleur* are explorations of that moment when Paris was freed from German occupation — when 'the last snipers' were on the roofs but the war had 'left Paris behind'. Besides those already outlined, there's the account of a Resistance worker's complex, multiply treacherous involvement with a Gestapo agent and, most devastating of them all, the description of an informer's torture. This last reveals Duras' ingenious use of fact very clearly.

Sludge uncovered by the Resistance as the war drains away to the West, the informer — 'Fifty years old. Squints a bit. Wears glasses' — is taken to the cashier's office of a bar. He's ordered to strip then punched 'slowly, hard' on the chest, in the face, on the genitals. Men who've been interrogated by Germans do the actual hitting; the questioning is done by a woman called Thérèse, of whom the most specific thing said is that she is 'waiting for a man who may have been shot'.

'We want you to tell us the color of the card that let you into the Gestapo,' she repeats, as the half-blinded prisoner scrabbles in a corner, tries to cover himself, dribbles blood. 'Even when he's dead,' she thinks, 'he won't be like a dead man. He'll clutter up the hall. Perhaps it's a waste of time.' The woman, Thérèse, is Duras. We're not asked to wonder whether she might be; it's spelt out before we start the story: 'The person who tortures the informer is me.'

I don't think I can over-emphasise how little the account reads like a confession, or a justification, or agitprop, or any of the things that it might have become (including, of course, pornography) in the hands of a less ruthless, less careful, less brilliant writer. Helplessly, we are bundled into identification with the character Thérèse (it's Marguerite Duras, damn it, we know her; even if we've never read her before, we've just shared her suffering over her husband). Then, abruptly, we're told we can go: that no political, psychological or moral simplification, no heroic glamour or romance, no snaring device like first-person narration will be used to keep us where we are. Thérèse can be us; or else we can leave, as some of the Resistance members leave the room.

Freed, yet transfixed by the glare of Duras'

writing, I understood torture for the first time ever. And, for anyone irritated by my earlier, easy distinction between 'fact' and 'truth', it might help to say that it makes no difference whether Duras' 'Thérèse is me' is literally the case not. Just as it makes no difference to a truth about the Holocaust whether or not a particular child, a seven-year-old called Aurélia Steiner, sang half-remembered Jewish songs while a woman guarded her life, her death, with a revolver.

Yves Navarre, like Marguerite Duras, is a winner of the Prix Goncourt. He won it in 1981 with the novel *Le jardin d'acclimatation*, just published here as **Cronus' Children**.

It's an interesting story, a story of hatred and of children damaged by a father powerful publicly as well as domestically: the most obviously (physically) damaged being Bertrand, whose open gayness once threatened the future of his father's political career. Starting as it should have gone on — with Papa Prouillan taking the old family poodle out for a walk; which ends at the vet's, for the dog — it soon, however, begins to stagger under moral self-importance, verbal self-indulgence and a narrative scheme as oppressive as thunder that refuses to break into rain. Most of this must be the author's doing, but the headache-inducing (and sometimes senseless) punctuation may be the translator's. The English language doesn't use commas in quite the same way as the French. □

MAGAZINES

Shelf life

Jenny Turner

IT'S HEARTENING to see **Cencrastus** (No. 22, £1.50) publish two generous slabs of Neal Ascherson's 'Devolution Diary'. Like so much of the Scottish literary Left, *Cencrastus* has been haunted for too long by the ghost of the Scottish Assembly that never was: it's about time to bury the dead and get reconstructed ready for the next bout in the devolution debate.

At any rate, this is easily the best issue in years: Ascherson's inimitable meanderings sandwich an excellent *Festschrift* to Ian Hamilton Findlay, concrete poet, sculptor, garden templar and — as head of the parapractical secret society The Confessors of St Just — guerrilla in the side of Strathclyde Regional Council. It's a fertile juxtaposition, amounting to a manifesto for the uses of the more obscure arts in a small country.

Radical Scotland (70p) celebrates its 21st issue this summer, yet still doesn't seem to have got around to even constructing itself. Without *Cencrastus*'s Arts Council subsidy, it depends entirely on the goodwill of its advertisers (inadequate), the imaginative energy of its editors (likewise) and the mercy of subscribers (getting very strained). *Radical Scotland* looks and reads like a nightmare bastard *Marxism Today*. Everything's there, more or less in the right order: theory (André Gorz), policy (housing, racism, gay politics,

PR), news, reviews, gossip; but it's there because someone suspects it ought to be, not because of any coherent strategy. And the magazine is dull, messy, badly laid out and has the most hideous cover, a full frontal portrait of a brown paper bag, which merely begs all the wrong sort of questions.

In a society which puts a premium on freedom of speech, the really dangerous thing (punishable by ritual humiliation at the hands of sleek Fleet Street hacks) is to ask questions which cannot be answered through normal channels. **Lobster** (No. 6, £2 from 17c Pearson Avenue, Hull) investigates what its editors argue was a smear campaign against the Wilson government, conducted by MI5 with the connivance and support of extreme Right think-tanks and Tory luminaries. The strength of the argument — well written and as well documented as it can be — is of course limited by the fact that few will read it, fewer believe it. The evidence — drawn from discredited ex-psy ops men, A.Non, conjecture and Chapman Pincher read against the grain — can only be verified by people with good reason not to do so.

In a telling footnote, the authors register their disgust that Philip Whitehead seemed more interested in the Sex Pistols than the case

against Marcia Williams when he came to write his super sizzling Seventies retro, *The Writing on the Wall*. Well, like poetry, culture nothing affirmeth, and nothing doth it lie, and quietists since Sir Philip Sidney know fine you can live a perfectly satisfactory life by plugging into the nearest, easiest debate and sticking to it hard.

Take, for example, the 'debate' about sexuality. **Spectacular Diseases** (No.8, £1.80 from 83b London Road, Peterborough) is fairly typical of one 'sexuality' strand, the sort of highminded libertarianism that refuses to acknowledge any responsibility outside art-gallery walls. The texts (many by women) are post-Rimbaud, post-Beat, post-Patti Smith with a choice little *quelque chose* by Georges Bataille (but of course) as a bonus, all devoted to representing various sexual acts which, however elaborate, seem to me to miss the point, which is surely their contexts, ramifications and implications.

The latest **Oxford Literary Review** (£5.95), a collection of documents from the Southampton Sexual Difference Conference, exhibits another bad faith, the point where academic disengagement comes close to political irrelevance. You need a field, really, to get on with short, snappy semi-arguments

such as *OLR* is good at; fieldless, I can wave a hand at Paul Hirst on the fallacies of natural law and hence essentialism, Gayatri Spivak on imperialism, Andrew Ross on *Miami Vice* — and Beverley Brown on Kant's ethical blind spot. The latter is called 'I read the metaphysics of morals and the categorical imperative and it doesn't help me a bit'... do unto others, as the old man (almost) used to say? The understandable, but ultimately infantilising feminist tendency to say nothing on sexuality for fear of being offensive is bravely tackled by Susan Ardill and Sue O'Sullivan in **Feminist Review** (No. 23, £4.95), already reviewed in the NS.

But, beyond the fragments, if it isn't sexuality then it tends to be Popular Culture. 'Popular fucking culture... the ground begins to swell as a noisome gurgling spreads across the countryside...' Thus begins 'Do What?', a resigned and witty account of the Kent Popular Culture Conference in **Monitor** (No. 6, 85p from PO Box 59, Oxford OX1 1UE). Oxford's very own cultural theory gradzine hates pop, rock, academics, people who are boring about punk, glib artists, marketeers, theorists, the lot. It's a constructive hate-in, because the essays are well informed, mixing theory with personal

IF THERE ARE carvers and modellers in fiction-writing, Barry Unsworth, author of **Stone Virgin** (Penguin, £2.95) certainly belongs to the first category. Along with his hero Simon Raikes, restorer of the eponymous statue, we stand on the outside of a mystery and chip our way in, and in doing so discover that the whole question of object-maker versus object, seer and seen, is under scrutiny.

Raikes is ardent, reverent, a modern knight fighting corruption in the very fabric of his Gothic Virgin of the Assumption. Venice surrounds him, with its polluted, vibrant past and its present in which Tintoretto scholars play s/m games in sacristies and art dealers collect pubic tufts as well as Piranesis. And when the Madonna, emblem of all that is chaste in woman, begins to transmit echoes of the darker side of her history, it is Raikes' body which becomes an unwilling conduit for the lustful scenarios engraved on her.

There's Boccaccio-style comedy here, but seriousness too, for, when Raikes falls in love with sculptor's wife Chiara, the question is whether she will allow herself to be trapped in his virgin/whore duality, or force him to a new synthesis. Yet the strength of Unsworth's novel doesn't lie simply in its critique of masculine love, courtly and carnal, sacred and profane. For *Stone Virgin* is also a murder mystery, a reflection on mediaevalism versus Renaissance humanism, creator versus critic and — last but not least — an elegy to Venice, its water and stone.

Jonathan Raban is a chiseller too, if on a slightly smaller scale. **Foreign Land** (Picador, £3.95) shows us England's idiocies and failures of spirit through the invigoratingly sharp eye of George Grey,



Rock of ages

Alison Fell

ageing emigré who, after a life in the comfortable shambles of an African marxist republic, find himself retiring to a savage landscape of blimps and bungalows. The sea seems a far safer haven, so George casts off into a storm-ridden Channel and, in the course of the voyage, reviews the past — his brief marriage to the hopelessly upper-class Angela, his abandonment of his baby daughter Sheila, now grown to self-contained, prickly maturity.

Raban deals beautifully with all things seamanly, yet somehow that authoritative eye of his — so devastating when trained on customs officers or yacht-club commodores — is less well suited to describing interior events, and I confess I was left wondering whether George's epiphanies on board his small boat were finally wry or tragic.

In contrast to these two English writers, both Amos Oz and Jessie Kesson start on the inside and write their way out. Oz's **A Perfect Peace** (Flamingo, £3.95), set on a kibbutz in the months prior to the Six-Day War, is involuted, claustrophobic, often bitterly funny. 'Jews,' says the kibbutz chairman, 'have to learn the art of relaxing and putting down roots', which is just what Azariah, refugee from Europe, is feverishly trying to do, whereas kibbutz-bred Yonatan,

with his allergy to pine trees, thinks he might well prefer the Exile in the Desert.

The ambivalence of historical outcasts turned colonists pervades this fine, difficult novel. Xenophobia comes in for lampooning — for instance when Azariah and Yonatan and friends have a paranoid picnic in the woods — yet the details of commune life are touchingly idealistic and humane. In this difficult democracy the characters alternately savage and cosset one another; even the narration is a free for all, with no single narrator privileged as the old fatalism and the new sabre-rattling jockey for position.

Jessie Kesson is similarly drenched in her subject; in **Where the Apple Ripens** (Hogarth, £2.95) you can feel her grappling with the implications of her own life on every page. No controlling authoritative eye here, rather a selection of intense, partial, shimmering views of a rural Scotland where sensuality wars against Calvinism with an energy proportional to the force of the repression, and good girls aren't supposed to pick primroses on the Sabbath, or long for pink silk knickers, or dream of a 'knockie-doon' with the village bad lad. Kesson's characters are adolescents and orphans, outcasts and the very old: a girl gets pregnant just before her Highers, a retarded boy is wrongly accused of rape and banished to an institution, a free-thinking tinker woman gives St Peter a swingeing critique of the Gospel according to Decent Folk. These are singing stories, rich in landscape, dialect and poetry; Colette, daughter of a happier land, would surely have admired them. □

Alison Fell's novel *Every Move You Make* and poetry collection *Kisses For Mayakovsky* are published by Virago. Her next novel, *The Bad Boy*, will be published in spring 1987.

experience and the sort of empirical research that suggests a secret attachment to the hands they're biting. And — because every essay is extremely well written — it's instructive and perfectly accessible. With a free flexi too.

'Popular culture? Sounds great — I'll have ten!' is however what we hear from two disappointing launches into the younger market. **Well Red** (50p) is the magazine of Red Wedge ('for, but not of, the Labour Party') but looks much the same as *Smash Hits*: just substitute Bernie Grant, Brenda Dean and the Diggers for pop personalities of your choice. It is insulting and counterproductive to think you can build socialism by condescending to the least common denominator. **Fires** (£1.50), a radical arts quarterly, reads as if what seemed like a good idea petered out long before it reached the typesetter. It livens up only with an urgent plea for cash and contributors. In a climate in which even a foolproof conception with a readymade audience like *Women's Review* is struggling, you need more than a vague idea. □

Just bad friends

Michael Coren

G. K. Chesterton — A Biography
MICHAEL FFITCH *Weidenfeld* £16

'IF A THING is worth doing,' proclaimed Gilbert Keith Chesterton, 'it is worth doing badly.' A deal too many of the man's biographers have taken the aphorism to heart; it's been 30 years since anything of serious note about him has appeared. This year he comes out of copyright. Richard Ingrams is working on a biography, the author of this review on another and now Michael Ffinch has produced a contribution for Weidenfeld.

The choice of publisher is significant: for some period the *Tablet*, a Catholic weekly strongly associated with Chesterton, was virtually boycotted by Weidenfeld because of the supposed anti-semitism of the creator of Father Brown, Catholic apologist and doyen of pre-war Fleet Street. The miasma from this alleged racism has virtually obscured his near genius, modern research has shown the accusation to be false and supporters of Chesterton worldwide are at pains to clear his name. Michael Ffinch not only fails in this vital respect, but in others.

Ffinch's major problem is one of perspective. Too near to the subject, he suffers from complete loss of vision. He is a fan of Chesterton in the literal sense and hagiography was as inevitable as the avoiding of the issues. Ffinch is at home with Chesterton the prophet — indeed, this is the most important thrust of the book — and he is generally readable and lucid. But he does not convey the man's genuine wit. A 1914 dinner party: society lady to Chesterton 'Why aren't you out at the front sir?' Chesterton to society lady 'If you go round to my side madam you will see that I am.' There's too little of the rolling English drunk on the rolling English

road, too much of the philosopher of paradox. 'Those people,' writes Ffinch 'had done Chesterton a disservice in labelling him with such titles as the "Master of Paradox", in which the word was used to imply something like "nonsense through contradiction". Chesterton himself saw paradox as the "mere restoration of reality".'

All this is based on a painstaking reading of Chesterton's published and unpublished material. What hinders the literary strand of the biography is that the author has not taken a chronological attitude, but discusses Chesterton's style and writing in large, thematic chunks. If short stories arise in the life, it is time to devote several thousand words to short stories *throughout* the life. For the uninitiated this is confusing. There is no reliable skeleton of Chesterton's story, no guiding core as to when, where and why.

But the anti-Jewish question is the litmus test of any investigation into Chesterton. Ffinch merely says, 'There should be no getting away from the fact that Chesterton became, even if he was not already, strongly anti-semitic during the years after 1907.' No discussion of the context: Waugh, Buchan, Kipling, Haggard and so on. No full discussion of Chesterton's anti-Nazism in 1934, when the Left in Britain was still undecided. And nothing of significance concerning his relationships with Jewish people. The Wiener Institute, the best monitors of anti-semitism in Britain, does not regard Chesterton as a culprit. Ffinch really should have taken the case one or two steps further. 'Gilbert's time,' said a priest friend, 'will not come until his friends as well as his enemies re-think their opinions.' □

In our own words

Adewale Maja-Pearce

Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature
NGUGI WA THIONG'O *James Currey* £4.95

EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO I attended a conference on African Literature held at the Commonwealth Institute in London. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the Kenyan novelist and playwright, gave the keynote address on the first morning. He spoke of the necessity for the new African literatures to be written in the African languages. The hostility with which his words were greeted by the majority of the African delegates was tempered only by Ngugi's high reputation as one of Africa's major writers. I remember particularly the bewilderment of an Indian delegate who wondered what the problem was. He took it absolutely for granted that a nation's literature can only be created in the languages spoken by the people of that nation.

Ngugi's speech, considerably expanded, comprises the first of the four essays which

make up this book (the others being 'The Language of African Theatre', 'The Language of African Fiction' and an overview essay 'The Quest for Relevance'). His thesis is simple: that for African writers to continue to write in the European languages is to perpetuate the 'slavish and cringing spirit' of a colonised people; and that language is 'inseparable from ourselves as a community of human beings with a specific form and character, a specific history, a specific relationship to the world.'

That the matter even needs to be discussed is one of the most depressing realities of the African literary scene; but to meet with so much hostility in the process is simply bizarre. The explanation lies in the experience of colonialism itself, for which Ngugi, who began his writing career in English, gives an example from personal experience. At the secondary school he attended in the Fifties it was a punishable offence to be caught speaking in the vernacular: 'The culprit was given corporal punishment — three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks — or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY.' Conversely, mastery of English was well rewarded. To get into secondary school the students had to pass six subjects, all written in English. Failure in the English language paper meant failure in the examination as a whole, no matter how well one did in the other papers. Ngugi remembers one boy in his class, who passed with distinction in all the subjects except English, which he failed. That was the end of his academic career. He became a bus conductor.

That this legacy of contempt for African cultural achievements has survived colonialism was clearly demonstrated at that conference at the Commonwealth Institute. At its most extreme it has given rise to The Kamuzu Academy in Malawi, an elitist grammar school set up by President-for-life Dr Hastings Banda to produce boys and girls who will be sent to Oxbridge and Harvard. All the teachers are recruited from England: suitably qualified 'natives' might lower the standards. Mercifully, President Banda is an extreme case, but in his very extremity he caricatures the prevailing ethic. It is why the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe can write the following: 'Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it.'

Fortunately there are hopeful signs that things are changing. This is because, after 25 years of independence, there is beginning to emerge a generation of writers for whom colonialism is a matter of history and not of direct personal experience. In retrospect that literature characterised by Ngugi as 'Afro-European' — the literature written by Africans in the European languages — will come to be seen as part and parcel of the uneasy period between colonialism and full independence, a period equally reflected in the continent's political instability as it attempts to find its feet. Ngugi's importance — and that of this book — lies in the courage with which he has confronted this most urgent of issues. □

TODAY WE HAVE flossing of teeth.

And every day, said the hygienist, amazed that anyone could have imagined 'regularly' meant once a month or so.

Given a choice of bits of myself to gaze at, the inside of my mouth comes low on the list (but you try flossing your teeth without looking; that is, if you're accustomed to sight) and flossing comes low on my list of favourite things to do. I'm just no good at it. My teeth are recalcitrant; the molars don't want to be parted; the floss is always snagging and, when tugged, simply frazzling into myriad snagged threads; and as often as not I end up gagging because I can't seem to get the angle of the hands right.

So why, given all this moaning, do I still do it most days? Is it because I have been granted a vision of pinkly healthy gums, advert-sparkly teeth and a ring of confidence glowing through my life? No, it's actually more in order to avoid the sad dental 'tut-tut', the long-suffering 'Brush-work not very good this time, is it?', the embarrassingly telltale blood on the hygienist's floss. Mind you, it works the other way too. There's nothing like an 'All in good order; well done' to have you feeling like a seven-year-old who just did a whole sentence in joined-up writing.

But behind the back-to-school sensations there's a real threat of decay and suffering. Dental pain may be trifling compared with some of the possible agonies that humankind is subject to, but most of us know what it's like. Our teeth follow us into the world and precede us out of it (or used to), reminding us betweenwhiles, with their aches and eruptions and sudden sneaky thrusts of pain, of our common fleshliness, vulnerability and short-livedness. I don't suppose anyone ever died of toothache, but would Romeo have lingered under the balcony if the wind had been getting

Still on the floss

Gillian Wilce

to a cavity? Or Hamlet had energy to spare for his mother's treachery if troubled by a throbbing abscess? Is it any wonder that we dream about crumbling teeth?

And that's given a whole gamut of available treatments — and preventive measures, like flossing. It's no fun, even now, having an abscess lanced or a wisdom tooth out, but without anaesthetic? Done by a man in the market-place with pliers? A friend of mine's grandmother had all her teeth out at the age of 20 for fear of what might happen in her mouth after she'd joined her fiancé in the dentist-free mission-field.

Just having serviceable, relatively twinge-free teeth at an age when, in other times, other places, I'd have been toothless, if not dead, makes me grateful for having been born in the mid-20th century: an appreciation intensified by contemplation of my front teeth which owe nothing to nature (whose original efforts were cross-eyed, yellowing and moribund) and everything to artifice and my dentist.

The incidental sight of the glinting black stuff stretching away on either side of these small miracles of technology takes me back to the surgery of Mr S. who provided a first complete lot of black stuff before I was ten. Mr S. was Latvian and an excellent dentist; everyone said so. 'Oh yes, he'd always save your tooth for you if he possibly could, none of this yanking it out as soon as look at it like some

I could name.' But he was wary of modern inventions like painkilling injections. I sometimes wonder if a whole habit of distrust of life didn't set in under repeated exposure to nice Mr S.'s way of saying, with total conviction, just as he set his drill a-whining, 'It will not hurt. I promise. Not at all.'

And yet I travelled back to Mr S. from wherever I was until the day of his retirement because of my basic confidence in his ability (he had, after all, come round to the idea of injections sometime in my teens); and I've known other people travel the length of the British Isles rather than change their allegiance, so powerfully emotive is the whole business of going to the dentist. My own faith in dentistry, after a brief but disturbing interlude post-Mr S., best left veiled for the sake of readers of a nervous disposition, is so restored that I hardly ever grip the arm-rests and break out in a cold sweat at the very sight of the polisher nowadays. And I know I'd do anything (almost) rather than change dentists again, including, I confess it, pay privately.

Other people's jobs are a constant source of wonder and speculation and I sometimes try to imagine how anyone gets to decide to be a dentist; one can't quite envisage the calling descending like a shaft of light in the middle of a sixth-form biology class, say. But my heart doesn't bleed all that much for them. Dentistry's a skilled and comparatively well regarded profession. To be a hygienist, though . . . to pass your entire working week flossing other people's teeth and reminding them, kindly but firmly, over and over and over again about the benefits of oral hygiene . . . well, the very thought makes me ashamed that I can get through the flossing of one mouthful of teeth a day only by (your handy household hint for the week) dividing the job in two — top set in the morning and bottom at night.

Weekend competition

No 2936

Set by Red Dorn

Reading a new paperback of the *Clerihews of Paul Hogan* (Harper and Row, £6.25) reminds me how good they can be and how long it is since we've had a clerihew comp. Now's the time; the subject is contemporary novelists, film makers or musicians; the deadline 21 August.

No 2933

Set by A. Boteman

Meaningless proverbs.

Report

By Red Dorn

A flatterer's throat is an open sepulchre, honesty is the best policy and it is surely better to speak truth rudely than lie covertly. Most of your entries were lousy. Wise men make proverbs and fools repeat them, which you did, with updates and puns but not nearly enough absurdity. Still, the bee sucks honey out of the bitterest flowers and I managed to find a few winners, which get £2 each because small gifts make friends, great ones enemies. Better luck next time; hope is a poor man's bread.

New Statesman 8 August 1986

The dog has no need of the elephant

The beach is long that does not reach the water
WILL BELLENGER

Every courgette becomes a marrow

Snow in April; blackfly in June. Sleet in March;
slugs come soon

Your neighbour's cat is often plump
NICHOLAS MURRAY

The breeze in Brighton is felt in Hove
ROB HULL

Twa piggles dinna mak a thrup

A burnt kipper has a long thrall
ALAN REA

The *Church Times* costs less than the *New Statesman*
GEORGE COWLEY

Birds fly; moles delve
LYDIA SHAXBERD

Chipped plates can hold fish
Behind every batsman there's a wicket
KATHY PAUL

The first cat is the cheapest
DAVID ABENHEIMER

When lions roar deaf zebras just keep grazing
SUE ADDINELL

A dead horse is a fool's wager
The sun always shines on half the world
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

He longest at his slumber lies
That's first to bed and last to rise
NOEL PETTY

Vain is the search for that which is not there
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

You can't jangle credit cards
V. ERNEST COX

Never push at a handle
MARGARET HODGSON

You can't pick your nose with a spanner
LISSA EVANS

No man is a pylon
NICK WRAY

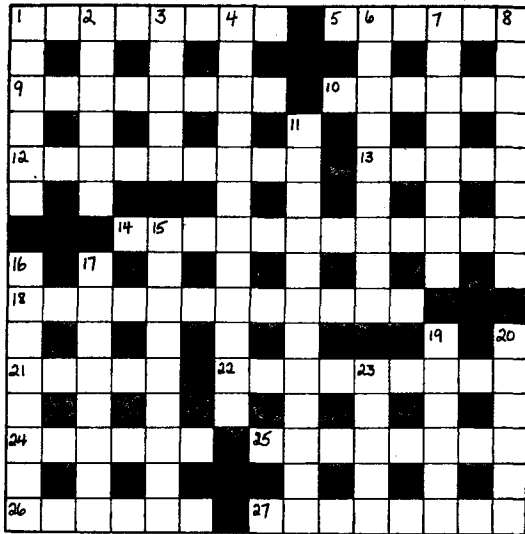
A flea may dance on a dog with ease,
But a dog has difficulty dancing on fleas.
DAVE HINTON

Heavy rains fill the drains
ERIC SWAINSON

If knees did not bend, men would not kneel
GERARD BENSON

Weekend Crossword 1527

PRIZE: £10 Book Token for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1527, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 19 August.



Name _____

Address _____

ACROSS

1. I'm surrounded by Germans carrying expensive weapons (8)
5. Drink associated with the hop (6)
9. Solitary man who is about to give out (8)
10. Circle in which king is held by subject (6)
12. Frenchwoman gives trouble to the city after ceremony (9)
13. Joint used in teaching elementary joiners (5)
14. Box of gold valued as arranged for players (12)
18. One who works the handle with a coin to make bread (12)
21. State which is left inside paper (5)
22. Howling like a wild giant pursuing a retreating woman (9)
24. Reproaches for beginning to be tough with relatives (6)
25. One animal which is almost unfit to be eaten by another (8)
26. A knavish one sleeps in a foolish ear (6)
27. Wild emotion in which they have their say (8)

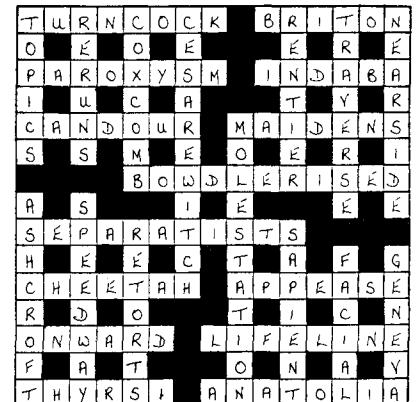
DOWN

1. Tries to clean those who are very dirty (6)
2. Not wide awake, so spending a morning in the nest (6)
3. Soul of tailless creature (5)
4. Food for a high-born lady? (4,2,6)
6. Performer of slow movement in arrangement for orchestra (9)
7. Crests of the leading birds (8)
8. Had a nice lay-out for an estate (8)

11. Sport is in an angry state (12)
15. Being ill, I act badly after a man goes into the drink (9)
16. Works in which poets are translated (8)
17. Being young, shut up without returning thanks (8)
19. One who feels sorry having been in a good row (6)
20. Business which turns up in bad negative propaganda (6)
23. Give out the conclusion of the poll (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1525



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AMIALE ED, now in lovely Devon, seeks woman-friend (perhaps with children), in West or Black Country. I've outdoor and intellectual interests with feminist sympathies. I'm tallish, lithe (photo available) with native, Georgie charm. Box (31)3483. N31.10

ARE YOU male 35-40, unattached, well adjusted, humorous, self sufficient? Lady lecturer, living in North, affectionate, honest, independent, offers intimate though casual friendship. Box (31)3466. N31.8

ADVENTUROUS YOUNG woman sought by caring, mature man. Aware, considerate, non-smoker, left-wing, solvent and unorthodox. Home and exciting, life-style offered. Box (31)3463. N31.11

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG woman artist, 26, would like to meet adventurous man engaged in original research or enterprise, 25-30, for sensitive, mutual enjoyment. London. Box (31)3462. N31.13

DATLINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011. N49.20

ECENTRIC MALE, 37, Oxford degree, CV getting worse, hoping for a comeback with a lady friend. I am open and warm. Bradford, Yorks. Telephone number please. Box (31)3471. N31.15

EX-WIFE, attractive, not slim, living London, wide interests, fed up with available bores, seeks male over sixty, for caring relationship with marriage in mind. Box (32)3505. N32.7

FEMALE, 37, seeks caring relationship with male, who believes that THE CONTINUUM CONCEPT (Jean Liedloff) is the most important book the world has ever known. Box (32)3510. N32.8

FRENCHMAN: living in London, now-unattached, teaching French and Counselling, intelligent, caring and experienced, seeks intelligent, sensuous, broad-minded lady for happy, giving relationship. Phone. Box (32)3495. N32.9



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HEARTSEARCH

ENTERPRISING, EDUCATED, perceptive professional woman, late forties, offers warm, caring relationship to right man, 50s-60. Seeking educated man to share wine and dining, discussion and argument, explore London and relationships, travel, most other NS interests. Observer reader preferred. Box (30) 3432

HEARTSEARCHERS PLEASE NOTE that telephone bookings can only be accepted if accompanied by a credit Card Number (Access, American Express, Barclaycard, Diners' Club, Visa). N27 18

'IT TAKES two to be glad'. Cosmopolitan woman, Guardian reader, Radio 3 listener, hopes to meet youthful man (over 55), friendly, thinking and humorous. London Box (31)3488. N31 21

LONELY DEVON male, 32, broke, ugly and shy with women, seeks lady to make life worth living, in discreet relationship. Looks and age unimportant. Box (32)3500. N32 10

LONELY LONE Wolf, high level of intelligence and integrity, ageless, weary of solitary howling to the gibbous moon, seeks similar mate. Intelligence essential, attractiveness a bonus, age unimportant. Box (32)3509. N32 11

MALE GRADUATE, 27, slim, fit, single, likes: sports, countryside, loves children, own flat, seeks interesting female company, preferably similar age, also Russian speakers — male/female! Box (31)3467. N31 22

MARRIED MAN seeks married woman for happy interludes. Successful professional, 36, he enjoys theatre, dining out and romance. Modest Porsche driver. London/South East. Box (29)3416. N29 25

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Please mark your postcard 'Computer Supervisor'.

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Please fill in this form and send it to Jacquie Monty or Gary Willis, Oxfam 724 High Road, N. Finchley, London N12 9QD. Tel: 01-446 8371. You won't be committing yourself but its helpful to know who may be able to help on the day.

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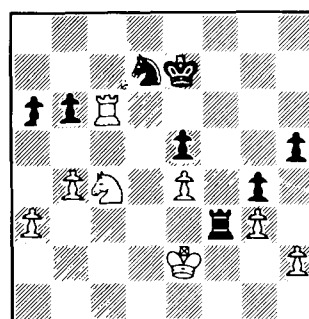
CHESS

THE FIRST GAME of the world championship match was a pretty unexciting draw. Had someone been saying, 'Look, comrade, let's save all the fireworks for Leningrad'? As if to confirm our fears, there was an early Queen-swap in the next. Surely another short draw on the way. But from this simple position Kasparov started squeezing and squeezing and from a little nothing extracted a very big ending.

Kasparov-Karpov, Game 2, 30 July. Nimzo-Indian.

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 Bb4 4. Nf3 c5 5. g3 Nc6 6. Bg2 d5 7. cxd5 Nxd5 8. Bd2 cxd4 9. Nxd4 Nxd4 10. Nxd5 Bxd2+ 11. Qxd2 Nc6 12. Nf4 Qxd2+ 13. Kxd2 Bd7 14. Rhc1 Ke7 15. Nd3 Rhc8 The obvious defensive set-up is 15... Rac8 followed by... b6. Karpov seems resolved to nurse the b7 pawn for as long as it

takes. 16. Nc5 Rab8 17. Rc3 Nd8 18. Rac1 Bc6 19. Nd3 Bd7 20. Ne5 Rxc3 21. Rxc3 Be8 22. b4 a6 The point of this move is revealed in the variation 22... f6 23. Nd3 Bc6 24. Bxc6 Nxc6 25. b5 followed by Rc7+. 23. Be4 h6 24. a3 f6 25. Nd3 Bc6 26. Bxc6 Nxc6 27. Nc5 Ne5 28. f4 Nd7 29. Nb3! With Na5, fingering the b7 pawn, in view. Black has problems, in particular his passive Rook. Kd6 30. e4 g5 31. Ke3 e5 A weakening move (square d5), but Black is already suffering from a sort of higher zugzwang. 32. fxf5 fxf5 33. Na5 g4 34. Rc2! Moves were being relayed live to the commentary room at the British Championship in Southampton Guildhall. Mestel and a few others in the audience guessed this move. h5 35. Rc1! But we didn't guess this one, which really puts the squeeze on. b6? Finally, with only a few minutes left on the clock, Karpov cracks. 35... Nf6 cannot be worse. 36. Rc6+ Ke7 37. Nc4 Rf8 38. Ke2 I would have given this!, but for once Kasparov plays the right move for the wrong reason. Rf3



a b c d e f g h

At this point it took Mestel about 5 seconds to spot 39. Rc7!, which wins outright. The threats are Rxd7+ followed by Nxe5+ and also Nxb6 and Nxe5. If 39... Rc3 just 40. Kd2. Or 39... Rf6 40. Nxe5 Kd6 41. Nxd7! wins. 39. Ne3 Nf6 40. Rxb6 Nxe4 41. Rxa6 Adjourned with Black's next going in the envelope.

Some hard work in store for the seconds. Pub analysis suggested that Black had enough counterplay to hold after 41... Rf2+ 42. Kd3 Nd6. Magnificent endgame play by Kasparov that had GMs in

raptures, according to an enraptured Mestel. Strange, though, that having outplayed Karpov in the art of slow strangulation he missed the killer blow.

Meanwhile in the British Championship 14-year-old Michael Adams was making a very impressive start, including this neat brevity in round 2.

Adams-Bowden, Southampton 1986. French Defence.

1. e4 e6. 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 c5 4. exd5 Qxd5 5. Ngf3 cxd4 6. Bc4 Qd6 7. 0-0 Nf6 8. Nb3 Nc6 9. Nbx4 Nxd4 10. Nxd4 a6 11. c3 Qc7 12. Bb3 Bd6 13. h3 0-0 14. Bg5 b5? Black should do something about the threat of Bxf6. 15. Bc2 Bb7 16. Bxf6 gxf6 17. Qg4+ Kh8 18. Qh4 f5 19. Bxf5! f6 19... exf5 20. Qf6+ Kg8 21. Nxf5 forces mate on g7 or h6. 20. Nxe6 Qd7 21. Rad1 Rf7 22. Ng5! Bh2+ 23. Kh1! 1-0.

Stop press: Kasparov-Karpov Game 2 was indeed drawn in the second session.

George Botterill

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This England

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□ One MP wrote: 'After showing a party of infants around the House, I received many charming letters, almost all of which recorded the most exciting moment of the visit was seeing a dog being sick in St James's Park. - *Guardian* (Aidan Foster-Carter)

□ Wessex Water Authority is to use a bug-eyed Optica observation aircraft as a spy-in-the-sky to spot

garden sprinkler users who dodge the £24 annual licence fee. - *East Anglian Daily Times* (A. J. Carter)

□ Britain's hard-pressed beekeepers who have seen up to 70 per cent of their bees wiped out by cold, wet weather, are now having to cope with 'rustlers' who are stealing entire hives with thousands of honey bees inside them. - *Sunday Telegraph* (George Moor)

□ The blessings of the car telephone are helping to keep Britain's churches in good repair. Some of the best-placed towers and spires are being used as transmitter sites to keep the upwardly mobile in touch with the world. And the rest is a godsend to fund-raisers more used to relying on whist drives and garden parties. - *Daily Mail* (George Moor)

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